

"Where's Ferret?" A hallow cheeked, sandy haired boy who was sneaking up on his thirteenth year asked his three companions in the nook under a bridge they used as their home.

"Don't know, Stalker." The youngest replied, a girl with blue grey eyes and ratty black hair, "You don't think she-"

"Hush, Pyg. Don't talk like that, you know Ferret can take care of herself." An older girl berated her, this girl sharing her younger counterpart's eyes, but her hair was straw colored instead of faded black.

"That's what you said about Cougar, Lulu." A dark boy with a shadow of facial hair on his young face and a cut running along his jaw, "And you know where he is."

Lulu glared at him coolly, "I know, orphanage. But Sable, we could live without the negativity."

"I'm not being negative, I'm being realistic. Every time we think we're being cared for by the strongest, most caring, loving person that can't get caught, we see them with the orphans or Fosters in a week. There's no point in getting our hopes up just to be let down." Sable snapped back.

"There is nothing wrong with hoping for something better, a better life, food, a house." Lulu said with her eyes shining in hope as she spoke her wishes.

"Than get caught." Sable said venomously, "There you'll be safe, and dry, and fed. Perhaps Fosters will decide they like you-"

"No, I will not be taken from my sister." Lul said hugging her sister closer as she tried to ignore Sable's taunts and the rain on London's cobblestone street.

"Hate to interrupt your argument, but Ferret's back." Stalker said and they all looked up to confirm his statement. Ferret's short brown hair was matted to her head and she was stumbling under the weight of something large in her arms. The boys hurried out to relieve her of

the weight and the three scurried in to hide from the rain next to the fire.

"It's a-" Sable dropped his sentence off and looked at Ferret who had given her jacket to her package. She rubbed her arms to regain warmth in vain seemingly unaware of Sable's want for her attention.

"A boy," She finally answered, "He was freezing in an Alley at the edge of town. He's cold, tiny, half starved to death..."

"And you, being so noble, couldn't just leave him there." Stalker finished.

"So, we'll do what we've always done," Ferret continued, "Obviously he's a run away. We'll offer to share our humble abode, and our companionship to him in return for help getting food. If he accepts our offer, we give him a name. If not, we help him return home or get into an orphanage. Agreed?"

"Me and Pyg are." Lulu answered immediately, followed closely by Stalkers pledge.

They waited for a minute as Sable looked at the boy, "Fine, but only because I know what will happen if I say no." The last one to refuse Ferret one of her 'children' was abandoned that night and found by the orphanage. That was the last thing that Sable wanted.

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He woke up warm, incredibly sore, his head was a bit fuzzy, but he was warm. Wait, warm? He panicked sitting bolt upright pushing the coat someone had spread over him off and looked around, he could see fuzzy shapes all around him and the orange glow of a fire. A girl sat across from him, the fire reflecting off of her light colored eyes. Her voice was soft, "It's okay, little one. You're safe, no one harms any of my children."

He vaguely remembered the voice, and he found it soothing enough to lay back down. Aching exhaustion forced his eyes closed and he was asleep once more. He barely noticed a strong hand cover him

with the coat once more, a feeling completely alien to him. No one had ever cared for him, tucked him in, or even referred to him as anything but a freak.

Freak. That's what his Aunt and Uncle called him, and in turn, so had his cousin. Every time something went wrong they had blamed him, the freak. Sure, the yelling had been bad, but that was nothing compared to the starvation, and every once in a while a beating. Now that he was in school his cousin even beat him up in school, and all the other kids made fun of him for his scar and his dead parents. But what could he do? He was a freak.

Several hours later he felt a gentle hand shaking his shoulders, he pulled away and was halfway to his feet in a second. The only times he was ever touched usually meant he would soon be on the receiving end of pain. The hand immediately left him followed by the girl softly saying, "Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you."

Sorry? Was she saying sorry to him? The freak? There was no one else she could be talking to him while her soft green eyes were staring into his. No one had ever apologized to him before, what was he supposed to do now?

"Did you run away from home?" The girl asked gently with unfeigned kindness as she handed him his glasses, taped in the middle from breaking and therefore crooked. Unable to bring himself to speak after three days of solitude he merely nodded his head.

The girl looked over at four others he hadn't noticed, which nodded, some more eagerly than others. The girl's focus went back to him, "If you want you can live with us, be friends with us and help us support each other, or we can help you home or to an orphanage. The choice is yours."

Did they just offer to help him? Home was obviously not an option, he would never go back there if he had any say in the matter. As for the orphanage, it had been a threat from his Uncle on numerous occasions, which meant he'd be better off back with them. In light of no better option, he figured that staying with these people, who seemed nice enough as far as he could tell, was better than being

alone. "I-I'd like to stay with y-you." His voice said, weak from it's lack of use in the past days.

The green-eyed girl smiled, "Then I guess we should go through some introductions. I'm the leader of our pack, which is what we've called our group of orphans for years. We don't use our real names, so everyone calls me Ferret and I'm fifteen. Going against my word will have you abandoned. The pack sticks together." She finished proudly.

A girl with steely blue eyes and dirty blonde hair found her voice next, "Hi, I'm thirteen and everyone calls me Lulu, I'm a caretaker of a sort in the pack. And this," She indicated the black haired girl on her lap with matching eyes, "Is Pyg, she's my seven year old little sister."

"I'm Stalker, twelve years of age. I'm the peacemaker of the pack." A sandy haired boy said, his eyes half opened as if in a constant rest. Something about the boy struck him as comforting and vaguely familiar...

"My name's Sable," The dark boy cut in, everything about him was dark, his black hair, facial hair, tanned skin, and obsidian eyes, "I'm a month away from seventeen and I'm the fighter of the pack." I wouldn't put it past him the boy thought looking at the size of the boy who was clearly jealous of Ferret's leadership.

"Umm... my name is-" He began, rather unsure of himself.

"Don't tell us your real name, we'll come up with one for you soon enough. Just tell us the basics, your age and why you decided to run away." Lulu interrupted.

"Well, I'm eight years old. My parents died when I was only one year old in a car crash, that's where I got this scar," He pulled hair from his forehead to reveal his scar, "Ever since I've lived with my Aunt and Uncle. I ran away because I'm tired of being called a freak, among other things."

"Other things?" Stalker asked raising an eyebrow questioningly, "What exactly constitutes as 'other things'?"

The boy flinched at the tone, but replied softly anyway, "Yell, lock me in a cupboard, hit me every now and then."

"No wonder you flinched..." Ferret said quietly, "I have to admit, that's a strange scar you have there."

"Trust me, I know." The boy replied.

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(A/N: Okay chapter one is done. I already have most of the story planned out, tell me what you think. Please review!)

It was sunny today, and today was Saturday. That meant that dinner would probably be good, and Cub liked that.

Usually they would break off in groups, him, newly dubbed Cub, and Pyg would scrounge together, Stalker and Lulu would keep each other company, but Ferret and Sable went alone. Ferret said he was always a rebel, and was never fond of being bossed around by a girl, much less by a younger girl. Occasionally Sable gets mad and storms off to fend for himself for a few days, but he always comes back and apologizes even though no one knows why he left.

"Cub? Are you spacing again?" Pyg asked in her quiet voice, which had become that of a best friend to cub in the past month.

"Sorry, we should go before the others think we got lost." Cub replied and the two began slipping through the city to their intended destination. Cub smiled as he remembered his first Sunday with the pack.

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"Everyone up!" Ferret had called in her usual merry voice, bringing everyone to wakefulness.

Cub had emerged from the corner of their cave that he had claimed as his and saw everyone bringing forth small items that he recognized soon enough, Stalker had a makeshift Drum, Lulu had colored ribbon and Sable had a recorder that was worn. Cub watched them all as Lulu began tying the ribbons into Pyg's hair as the seven year-old squirmed in excitement. What was going on?

"What about Cub?" Sable asked, his dark voice did eventually become something one accepted.

"He can dance with Pyg, the two are inseparable anyway." Ferret replied, which worried Cub seeing as he had never danced in his life. "You're okay with that, right Cub?"

"But I don't know how..." Cub stated, and with the look Pyg was giving him he felt like he was being called a freak.

"It's easy Cub, I'll teach you." She said taking his hand, "Besides, as long as we look happy we'll be doing our job."

"What job?" Cub asked.

"How could we have forgotten?" Stalker said hitting himself softly on the forehead to indicate he thought himself stupid for forgetting, "Saturdays we perform on street corners for money, me and Sable play, the girls sing, and you two will dance."

"I'll take Cub if we need to leave in a hurry." Sable said looking annoyed, but they all knew that he was wrapped around the fingers of the two youngest.

"Why would we need to leave in a hurry?" Cub had been asking a lot of questions, they all agreed that it was his relatives had frowned upon such practice.

Ferret faltered at the question, "This isn't precisely something that the law likes, and if a cop catches us we will be taken straight to the orphanage."

That was lesson number one, never trust adults. They would always claim to be doing what's best, but it usually ended up with the kids being hurt. And Sable and Cub couldn't just forgive years of neglect and abuse, it was best to stick with kids. Dudley was a different issue, he had learned from evil, therefore he was evil himself.

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Saturdays were always fun, festive music played by the boys, the girls singing funny lyrics, Cub and Pyg doing silly dances, the sound of coins dropping in Stalker's old hat, and at the end of the day a filling meal. Today was the usual Saturday bliss, though littered with several hundred renditions of Happy Birthday for Sable who hid his thanks in sarcastic remarks. At seventeen he was now the oldest and decided that he could deal with being led by someone younger.

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On a Saturday morning almost two years later everything changed. We were in the middle of a performance when a group of cops appeared.

Lulu picked up her sister and Sable grabbed my arm and five pairs of bare feet began fleeing in the London streets and tried to slip down a short cut home in a dark Alley. Unfortunately nine years of practice with the pack was enough to catch us, all of us. Lulu was first caught because she was burdened with her sister's weight, at least they were kind enough not to take her sister from her arms.

Stalker was next, built for sly slip-aways instead of speed he was tackled on the hard street, all we heard was the sound of his drum rolling on the uneven ground behind us. Ferret got herself caught as a distraction for Sable and me, who slipped into nook between two buildings where he wrapped his arms around me. Both of us were shaking, we didn't do well with people. You can never forgive the people that hurt you, and when you've been hurt everyone seems after you.

Two cops pulled us out, but we fought the touch. Sable gave the skinny man holding his arm a black eye that made him fall on his back. Two other cops took Sable in a vice-grip that made the eighteen year-old frown in disgust. I was only able to almost gain freedom by wrenching my arm from his grasp, all he did was tighten his hold and bring both hands behind my back. Both of us were pushed into a car and we were off to some station where we were asked questions.

"How long have you two been living illegally under that bridge in London?"

"Seven and a half years." Sable replied with enough venom in his voice to kill an elephant. Even after living with him for two years his temper could still surprise you.

"Twenty-five months." I replied looking anywhere but there eyes, comforted by the fact I was near Sable. Unfortunately, the interrogator reminded me a lot of my uncle, the tone didn't help at all.



“Age?” The gruff man asked.

“Nearly nineteen.”

“Ten.”

“And your names?”

“Sable and he’s Cub.” Sable answered for me, the man turned red.

“Oh, yes, a joker, just like your little friends. I want your real names.”  
The man practically growled.

“Nigel Hawthorn.” Sable glared back.

“Harry Potter.”

“Take them to the orphanage.” The interrogator said and the guards went to grab us, but Sable backed away.

“We’ll go without force, or not at all.” The guards looked taken back but allowed us to walk on our own to the car, and from the car to the orphanage that loomed over us. Sable’s face was unreadable, but I could sense he was unhappy about the predicament, I couldn’t blame him.

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(A/N: The next chapter will be in the orphanage. To avoid misunderstandings, Harry does not trust any adults, children only, he deals with Ferret and Sable because he met them while they were still teens. I’ll try to update soon, but I’m also working on another fic. Please review, that’s what made me update so soon!)

It had been years since he had been around wizards, of course that didn't count Albus who often stayed with him during the full moons when he was tamed by the wolfsbane potion. For the last ten years he had been well secluded from the wizarding world and kept money by having a part time job at a near by bakery. It wasn't a high paying job, but it made him less suspicious to his muggle neighbors in the shanty neighborhood in London.

Like always, Remus picked up the daily paper because his co-workers actually enjoyed discussing various topics as they worked. He found this understandable because occasionally he would forget he was even doing anything. Remus usually skipped straight to the local news page after realizing front page news was usually written as if by Rita Skeeter, but today the picture on the front page caught his attention. There were two boys, no big deal except for the fact that both were being escorted by police, and one looked very familiar...

Harry, he could even see the scar etched out on his forehead. Why was Harry being arrested? Against his better judgment he began to read:

For years the streets of London have been plagued with the existence of a small group of children who call themselves the Pack, currently a group of six boys and girls. They steal food, beg, loiter, and have taken public property to use as their home. All of said children are either runaways or orphans that belong in an orphanage. The six were finally captured Saturday morning, but not without forcing police to chase them through the streets. Two of the boys, Nigel Hawthorn and Harry Potter(pictured above), resisted arrest from police giving the police captain a black eye in the process. All have been taken to the downtown London orphanage, more information on page six.

Several thoughts hit Remus immediately, first and foremost was why in Merlin's name did Harry run away from the Dursleys? As far as he knew all of the Dursley's were alive and well, he knew Dumbledore would have told him if otherwise was true. Next was what if a death eater read this in the paper and decided to adopt Harry? What if a muggle got there first? Remus decided there and then that right after work he would go to the orphanage and adopt Harry, because

what deatheater would read a muggle newspaper? And what muggle would adopt a juvenile delinquent?

He only worked for four hours this morning, so he grabbed his coat and almost ran across the street to the bakery once he realized he was going to be late because of his musings over Harry. Remus hit the time-clock about five seconds before the clock changed to seven-thirty, which made his three co-workers, Geoff, Anthony, and his boss Terence, laugh. The three were brothers, Anthony the youngest at twenty-seven, Geoff was thirty, and Terence was the oldest at thirty-six. Their father, who had hired Remus, had retired the year before at fifty-nine when his wife had a stroke.

“Cutting it a bit close there, Remus?” Terence joked in his usual soft baritone.

“Lost track of time a bit.” Remus smiled back and began trying to focus on the work ahead of him, but years of practice at the art made it all too easy to let his thoughts drift off to Harry at the orphanage. He hadn’t seen the boy all of the Marauders had cared for deeply for nine years, and they had all agreed that him and a certain rat he would rather not think about would be his uncles. And today they would be reunited.

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“Let’s see, Mr. Remus J. Lupin, age 28, single, has a job and a two bedroom apartment. I’d say you’re free to adopt, are you looking for a particular gender or age?” The black haired receptionist asked, she was kind enough, but was lacking in the brains department. It had taken nearly half an hour to get her to finally understand these three facts, and the rest would probably just confuse her even more.

“Actually, the son of one of my best friends is here and I would like to adopt him, Harry Potter.” Remus answered trying to seem patient to the daft woman.

A look of disgust crossed her face as she realized who he was talking about, “You mean one of the kids in the paper? You do realize the lot

of them are crazy, and he in particular tends to show a violent streak?”

“I realize it would be a shame to my friend’s memory to have his son grow up in an orphanage when I lived a couple blocks away.” Remus replied unable to bite his tongue any longer, and in this case didn’t particularly regret it.

The lady seemed to finally understand what he was saying, “Fine, him and his friends are right through here.” She said and led him to a old wood door and pulled it open without bothering to knock.

Six children who sat in a circle on the wood floor in horribly mismatched clothes, both in size and color, stiffened as the door opened with a dry creak. Instinctively they all moved closer together, a tawny haired boy and a girl with short brown hair and a sense of leadership in front. A dirty blonde girl and a scruffy blacked haired young man sat with their legs touching, linked by the younger children on their laps, two black haired children, and one was most definitely Harry. And they all glared at the two adults with mistrust.

“Harry Potter.” The receptionist called, seemingly unaware that the teens in questions were imagining her dying in horrible ways, including Harry from behind his glasses, “This nice man has come to adopt you.”

Three things happened at once, the other five instantly moved protectively closer to their charge was first. Second, Harry and the black haired girl clung tighter to one another’s hand. Third the scruffy boy put his arm around Harry’s waist and gave a low growl that reminded Remus of when Sirius was angry and forgot he wasn’t in dog form, but this time Remus was far from laughing.

“Don’t you want to go with this man?” The lady prompted, Harry’s green eyes met with Remus’ for a brief second, but that was long enough to get across the message that Harry would rather jump off a bridge. Unfortunately there wasn’t a bridge handy. The woman, that Remus utterly hoped would never have kids because she’d be too stupid to take care of them, finally said, “Harry, say goodbye to your-“

“Can’t I adopt him?” The dark scruffy boy said, “I’m nineteen.”

The woman rolled her eyes, “We’ve gone over this, just because you’re old enough doesn’t mean you have a job, money, a house, or anything else for that matter. Come on Harry.”

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Cub felt dreadful, he was going to live with a man he had never met before, and he was never going to see his friends again. That’s what happened when you were adopted, you were taken from the safety you knew and thrown into the arms of some unexpected adult. An adult that would think him a freak for everything, his scar, his whining, his questions, his freakishness, and heaven forbid he should ever find out about the magic...

It was subtle, but if Pyg and Cub were really happy, everyone around would be too. If they were sad, no one could smile if they got close. They had no idea how to explain it other than that they were magic, Ferret simply said it was better than only having the ability to destroy things. Sable argued that if we were upset enough we could probably get someone to commit suicide. Cub would keep that in mind for years to come.

He was barely aware Ferret, whose real name was Bridget, had taken him into her arms to say her goodbye to him since there was no way out. She softly whispered, “They can take you from the Pack, but you, my Cub, will always have the Pack in you.” Ferret’s usual philosophical nonsense no one ever understood until much later in their lives.

Cub was passed onto Stalker, though he was legally called Miles. He was held on to tight as Stalker gave his advice, “Everything is always okay in the end, Cub. If it’s not okay, it’s not the end.”

Next was Lulu, Lynn, her advice was rather simple, “No matter where you go, we will always love you, even if we never see you again.”

Pyg, Vaughn, was able to say nothing. How could you say goodbye to your best friend? Her tight embrace was enough to convey her message, though it more than vaguely resembled her sister's.

Sable was last, and his whisper was barely audible, "Wherever you go, find friends like you who will do anything to protect you, and you protect them. As for adults, trust as far as you can throw them, because those stronger than you will always let you down. And keep your chin up, don't let them know you're scared."

Sure, Sable wasn't the sentimental type, but he had strong principals that kept him alive and made him a good ally. When Sable let him go he straitened up with his head held high and walked over to the two adults. Remus instinctively tried to put his arm across the distressed boy's shoulder, Cub shrugged it off and gave his new 'Dad' a stern look that clearly showed his dislike for the situation. like all adults Cub could not throw him, much less pick him up.

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It was peculiar, Harry hadn't said a word, a declaration of glee or protest, instead he nodded yes, shook his head no, or glared to get his opinion across. Usually the latter two. Every attempt he had made to try to connect with the boy had been shot down, especially any form of touch, Harry would slip away from him or violently jolt back in order to get away. For the moment Remus decided giving Harry some time to adjust would be better than forcing him to accept both touch and words.

Remus' apartment was quaint, two small bedrooms, one that as of yet was unused, a bathroom and a larger room that was split between a kitchen and a living room. Harry stood by the door until Remus invited him to make himself comfortable, and even then Harry shrunk to the far corner of the living room where he curled up against the wall. Remus then realized that in his rush he had forgotten lunch, and should probably write to Dumbledore about Harry.

Lunch was more important at the moment, he asked Harry if he was hungry, Harry shook his head no. He quickly ate a sandwich and then pulled out ink, a quill and parchment that he had bought to

correspond with Dumbledore. The letter explained what happened, asked for advice about Harry's behavior, and then sent the letter with the barn owl that he kept in a cage in his room. Several hours later Harry had not moved an inch, and he wasn't doing anything, just sitting in a corner.

After a while Remus began making dinner, but Harry refused. Remus looked at him skeptically, "Are you sure you're not hungry?"

The boy made a quiet growl before replying, "I've gone days without food before, and I certainly won't take food from someone I don't trust."

This threw Remus off, but he was sure if he didn't push Harry the ten year-old would eventually trust him enough to eat. Remus suggested Harry go to bed, but Harry refused to leave his corner, however he did accept a blanket (though he was very hesitant to do so). The food that had been made for Harry was left out in case he got hungry, but the next morning the plate had remained untouched.

This was going to take a while.

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(A/N: Thank you for all of the reviews, and though I enjoy your enthusiasm, please do not write 'plz' 3,905 times in your review. I'm glad you like Sable, he is a big influence on Cub, though as we go on it will be primarily Harry who calls himself Cub. And I will read the Thief Lord when I finish A Tale of Two Cities. Please review!)

“Any improvement?” Hogwarts’ headmaster asked, it was now mid-July the morning after a full moon. Dumbledore had been completely understanding of Remus’ predicament and had amended him for his quick action to save Harry from the possible clutches of evil.

“None at all.” Remus replied.

“Does he know about his parents? About magic?” Dumbledore asked, now seriously concerned with the-boy-who-lived.

“I told him, whether he was listening or believed me if he did is unknown.” Harry seemed to have the odd hobby of staring blankly into space whenever someone talked to him.

“So he still doesn’t trust you?”

“No, I’m just glad he’ll finally eat. It took five days to reassure him that I meant him no harm.” Ah, those were five anxiety filled days. Even when he was at work, which Harry had accompanied him to, Harry never snuck so much as a crumb of bread. Every once in a while Harry would still refuse food for no apparent reason.

“Have you explained that you knew his parents?”

“I tried.”

Flashback

“You can trust me Harry, I promise.” Remus assured him on the third day of Harry’s fasting.

“Prove it.” Harry’s cold voice replied.

“Your father and I were best friends. I would never do a thing to hurt you.”



“My parents are dead, they died in a car crash when I was one, I’ll not have their friends rule my life.”

“Lily and James Potter were murdered by You-know-who, then he tried to kill you and you deflected the spell. That’s why you have that scar, not some silly car crash.”

“I don’t care how they died. I simply don’t care, so shove off.”

End Flashback

“I see, so has he shown any form of magic?” Dumbledore said in his usual understanding way.

“No,” Remus admitted.

“Well, I must go, I have an interview with a possible Defense teacher. I wish you luck.” With that final sentiment Dumbledore disappeared with a loud crack.

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“Happy Birthday, Harry.” Remus said on July thirty-first when he walked in the living room to see Harry with a bowl of cereal on the couch. The young boy’s head looked up in surprise and suspicion and eyed him oddly.

“What makes you think it’s my birthday?” Harry growled.

“I was there when you were born eleven years ago.” Remus replied calmly, no matter what he did or said, or the tone, Harry was always defensive. Several times Remus wanted to give into the voice in his head claiming all he needed was a hug, but every time he so much as brushed Harry’s clothing the boy would jerk back as if burned. Surely there was an explanation for this wrapped up in the boy’s mind. Unfortunately, the only time Harry spoke was to give a harsh reply to a question.

His musings were interrupted by an owl flying that was as dark as night itself, it landed on the arm of the couch and nearly dropped the letter in the milk of Harry's cereal. Harry seemed unaffected by the letter or the owl, but Remus had seen that Harry never showed any emotion. Remus nonchalantly moved behind Harry as the boy set aside his cereal(which the owl began nibbling on without comment from Harry) and picked up the letter.

To Mr. Harry James Potter,

Apartment 4, Lynton Road

corner of the room, London

The letters from Hogwarts were always oddly specific on the location of the addressee, somehow whoever wrote the letters knew exactly where the person slept(Harry had never so much as entered his room, though he did occasionally bring himself to sleep on the couch). The expression on his face never so much as wavered as he read, making Remus think that he may have actually been listening when he and Dumbledore were explaining he was a wizard. Or, he simply didn't care.

"Looks like we'll be going to Diagon Alley." Remus stated, there was no reaction from Harry, "How about tomorrow? I have the day off." Remus always had Saturdays off, but all Harry ever did was mope on Saturdays, and that was the he most often fasted. Once again Harry was silent, no nod or shake of the head, no question as to what Diagon Alley was(Remus never had explained it, he had always resolved that Harry was paying him no mind before he got there).

"This whole not talking thing is getting quite boring." Remus said, sure Harry was off in his own little world and now petting the owl that was loving the attention. When he got no reply he turned to get himself something to eat.

"Whatever you say, Moony." Remus jerked his head around at the sound of Harry's voice, but Harry had gone back to his cereal and the owl was on it's merry way. At this point he was used to Harry's quiet

little comments, but this was different. He actually sounded said, as if he was on the verge of tears. And even stranger, he'd called him Moony, something Harry hadn't been exposed to since he was a year old.

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Harry's reappearance into the known world had brought up many questions, first and foremost in his mind was why Harry left. Dumbledore could not fathom a child running away, and the age he was when he ran away was unknown as of yet. He'd known of many teenagers to run away(one of which being Sirius Black, prankster, supposed murderer and Harry's godfather), but less than ten years old?

This is what had prompted the old headmaster's return to number 4 Privet Drive, he wanted answers from the only source he could get to since Harry refused to offer any information. It was dark and raining, so he didn't even bother with those darned muggle clothes, he walked straight up to the door and rapped a few times. A woman with a bony face and long neck opened the door, Mrs. Dursley.

Her face contorted with disgust as she took in Dumbledore's robes, "Can I help you?"

"I was hoping to come in and have a talk with you and your husband." Dumbledore asked softly. Mrs. Dursley led him into the living room and went to fetch her husband, who came into the room grumbling about visitors coming this late, true, it was eight in the evening. They all settled, Vernon and Petunia side by side on the couch and Dumbledore in a comfortable arm chair.

"And who do you think you are?" Mr. Dursley asked, obviously the man was about to go to bed when Albus had come calling.

"Last time I checked, though it was a while back, I was Albus Dumbledore, headmaster of Hogwarts-"

"No." Mrs. Dursley cut him off quickly.

“No what?”

“Our son will not attend your school, he is not a... a freak!” The woman argued.

That was when Dumbledore first realized there was really a problem, they considered all wizards and witches to be freaks, how badly did they treat Harry? Bad enough to make him run away. A voice in his head offered. “Your son isn’t a wizard, I came here to talk about your nephew, Harry.”

“He isn’t here.” Vernon replied, “Hasn’t been for a while now.”

“I see, and when did he run away?” Albus asked feeling a strong feeling of anger towards the muggles.

Vernon and Petunia contemplated the issue for far too long to really know, finally the woman answered, “At least a year and a half ago, I don’t know exactly when though.”

Albus was no longer suppressing just anger, but the want to hex the two in horrible ways. “When you realized he was gone did you look for him?”

“No!” Vernon cried, as if the very idea was crazy to say the very least. Albus was able to excuse himself politely, but was unable to resist hexing them for their obvious dislike of everything magic and the possible damage they did to Harry that would last a lifetime. He sincerely hoped they liked their house in its brand new shade of pink.

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Of all the times Remus had wanted to read minds this was the one that would always stand out. Harry stood in the middle of his parents’ vault, surrounded by gold, silver and bronze, without making a move towards any of it with a hazy look in his eyes. After a while of just watching him, Remus began explaining wizard money to him, not

sure if it was penetrating Harry's skull or not. Truthfully, he felt bad for all of his future teachers.

At Olivander's Harry was flinching horribly at Olivander's slightest touch, which the old man seemed completely unaware of, though Harry eventually was matched with a wand of Holly and Phoenix feather. Surprisingly, while walking through the streets he stayed faithfully by the side of his adoptive father. It was ultimately decided that this was because while he may not trust Remus all that well, it was more than the strange adults swarming around him casting him smiles. The Leaky Cauldron had almost scared him to an early grave with all the people crowding his personal bubble.

Madam Malkin's had been strange though. Okay, he cringed every time the lady so much as looked at him, but it was his interactions with the other boy that was found intriguing.

-

Adults were everywhere, and all were shoving Cub's fame down his throat. He couldn't remember why he called Remus Moony, but it just felt right. He kept by Moony, that way he at least wouldn't get lost with all of these adults. He recalled walking through other streets of London as busy as this one, he would hold Sable or Ferret's hand and they would lead him through the crowd...

No, Cub told himself, the more you think about it, the more it hurts.

Finally he followed Remus into a store to find only two other occupants, the storekeeper and a boy about his age. He could tell a lot of things from one look at him, firstly, he was wealthy, second, he didn't care about anyone less important than him, thirdly, he would never have friends, just servants. And lastly, they would never get along. Still, it was better to talk to another kid than an adult.

"Is this your first year too?" The boy asked, in the whiny yet somehow aristocratic voice Cub was sure he was imitating from his father.

“ At Hogwarts? Yes.” Cub answered attempting to be civil, something the pack taught him.

“Is that your Dad?” The boy asked motioning over to Remus.

“My parents are dead.” Harry replied quickly, “He’s a friend of my father.”

“Were your parents both magical?”

“Yes.”

“What house were they in?”

Cub shrugged, in his head asking what in the name corn was ‘house’ supposed to mean? He decided to give a general answer, “No one ever says too much about them because they’re concerned they would hurt my feelings.”

The boy frowned, “I see,”

“Draco!” A blonde woman called from the door, “It’s time to go.”

Madam Malkin took off the robe she used for fitting and Draco headed out the door with who Cub suspected was his mother. At least she shared that same motherly tone Lulu had.

-

He acted somewhat close to normally around the other kid, and gave surprisingly sophisticated answers. It was then he came up with the theory that Harry’s revulsion wasn’t to people as much as adults. That didn’t explain that dark boy at the orphanage who was nineteen, though Dumbledore estimated he had left the Dursleys about two years ago which would make the boy seventeen. Merlin, Harry was an enigma if Remus ever saw one.

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(A/N: For all of you Sable lovers, he will be back, but it will be a long time from now. At the end of his first year to be exact. Thanks for the reviews, I'll be attempting to update twice a week if I can find time to type. Harry will only be referred to as Cub by himself or fellow Pack members. Next chapter Cub will be on his way to Hogwarts and sorted.)

King's cross was it's usual crowded mess of muggles and wizards on the first of September. Harry had gotten to the point that he trusted that Remus would not hurt him, so he wouldn't flinch at his touch, so as Harry steered his trolley with his owl that he' d named Hedwig on it Remus had his arm around his shoulders. Harry was still silent when it came to talking about anything, though time and time again proved that he was listening, especially his talk with Draco Malfoy. Remus had decided that he'd been hallucinating when he heard Harry call him Moony, since he hadn't addressed Remus on his own free will since.

When they got to the stone pillar between platforms nine and ten they ran into the Weasleys, he told Harry to just watch them and he'd know how to get on the platform. Harry showed mild interest as he watched the three oldest boys go through, the twins purposely flustering their mother, but the youngest boy hesitated. "Go on Ron, you'll run into the wall if you worry too much." Molly Weasley ushered, and he complied instantly vanishing through the bricks.

Molly noticed the young boy's interest, "His first time too?" She asked Remus, who nodded. She jumped straight into her mothering mode and tried comforting him at once, "No need to be scared dear, it's always strange the first time."

Harry let out a growl of indignation that was low enough only Remus could hear it and Harry jogged through the wall without any worry showing on his face. Molly looked somewhat confused at his feral behavior, Remus explained this as best he could from his current knowledge, "He isn't too fond of adults or being treated like a child."

Molly looked at Remus curiously, "Excuse me for saying so, but you two share no resemblance, he looks more like-

"James Potter?" Remus interjected and Molly nodded, "That's because I adopted him, it's James and Lily's son." He whispered.

"You mean the-boy-who-lived?" Molly asked wide-eyed, the red haired girl next to her shared the expression once Remus nodded.



-

Cub failed at suppressing a look of surprise as he saw the large red train marked Hogwarts Express, the red head, Ron, was looking at it similarly. Ron noticed him staring at the train as well, "First year?"

"No, I think that the train is so amazing that I simply have to stare at it every year." Cub replied, this made the boy smile at his sarcasm, a trick he'd picked up from Sable.

"Want to share a compartment? I don't know anyone else, and you seem nice enough..." Ron began, blushing.

"Sure, I don't know anyone else either." They set off and got on the train searching for an empty compartment. Ron noticed that Cub seemed to relax when they got away from the parents, but wasn't really sure what to think of it. There was no way he was going to chance losing a possible friend. Eventually they found an empty compartment and settled with Cub on one side and Ron on the other, neither sure how to start up a conversation. Ron waved to his mother and little sister as the train pulled away, and didn't say anything about Cub staying seated far from the window. They were several miles from the station before either of them said anything.

"Er... My name is Ron Weasley. What's yours?" Ron said his voice wavering ever so slightly.

"My name is C..." Cub stopped mid sentence in order to stop himself from saying Cub, knowing that lying was not a way to start a friendship, "Harry Potter." Cub held out his hand to shake, but Ron was staring open mouthed at him.

"You're Harry Potter? The Harry Potter? Do you really have the scar?" Ron asked with enough excitement to scare Cub.

"Yes," Cub replied and brushed his bangs from his forehead to reveal the lightning shaped scar. Remus had told him some people might act like this towards him, and he found it very annoying.

“Sorry,” Ron said now blushing, Cub was thrown off for the second time in his life by someone apologizing, but Ron hadn’t done anything.

“Why do you say that?” Cub asked showing confusion for the first time in months.

“You find people staring at your scar annoying, don’t you?”

“A bit I’ll admit. But I can deal with it.” Cub said, then asked, “Have you done any magic?”

“On purpose?” Ron asked, “Fred and George, they’re the twins, told me a spell to turn my pet rat yellow, but it doesn’t work. I accidentally turned my sister Ginny’s hair purple though. Ginny loved it, but Mum was furious.”

Harry allowed himself to laugh at that, he was glad to have a friend. The door opened to reveal a girl with long brown hair who looked flustered, “Excuse me, have either of you two seen a toad? A boy named Neville lost his.” Both boys shook their heads, “Well, I’d best get back to looking.”

Ron complained that she was concerning herself much too much, Cub argued that she was just a motherly person by nature and needed to be helping someone. That’s how Lulu had been, constantly needing to fuss over this or that. When the snack cart came Cub bought a bunch of wizard sweets to share with Ron, that’s when Draco came in along with his two cronies. Said cronies were the stupid type that were big enough to say that they were all brawn, no brain.

Draco scowled, “I heard Harry Potter was in this compartment.”

“And I am.” Cub replied.

“A pureblood like you shouldn’t be hanging out with filth like him. We would be glad to make friends with you.” Draco nodded to Ron as he said him.

Cub frowned as he remembered Sable's words, friends who will do anything to protect you, and you protect them. Harry wasn't going to let Draco hurt anyone in his pack, "You know what Malfoy(Remus had told Harry his name, claiming the entire family was followers of He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named), I think I'm a pretty good judge of character, and I know that Ron's a better friend than you will ever be."

Draco was caught off guard a bit, "I think you should think about who you're talking to, Potter."

"I was taught to trust my instincts, and they tell me that I should stay away from arrogant prats like you." Cub retorted venomously, he realized now that Ron was standing at his side. Malfoy looked uneasy, especially when Ron's rat, Scabbers, bit Malfoy's crony's hand when it wandered to close, all three left looking somewhat defeated.

"You know you just made enemies with one of the most powerful wizarding families over our friendship, right?" Ron asked looking uneasy.

"You're my friend and a good person, he's neither. Why should I waste what few manners I have on him?" Cub sat down again looking out the window as he heard Ron chuckle.

"Sometimes you act like you were raised by a pack of wolves." Ron said, making Cub smile.

"You're not that far off."

-

Sorting wasn't as bad as he had imagined it would be, the worst part was having an adult(some teacher called professor called McGonagall) put the hat on your head. He shivered at the thought, but he wouldn't show anyone his silent fear. Keep your chin up, don't let them know you're scared. He watched as one by one the first years went up to the three legged stool and were sorted by the hat. Ron was shaking, "I don't know why, but I feel afraid." Ron whispered,

Cub knew that he was probably doing magic again, but couldn't help it.

"Potter, Harry." The old lady called and tried to look inviting. It was thwarted when the room went quieter than it had been for any other person. Cub took a deep breath and marched up to the stool and sitting with unusual stiffness for anyone his age. A shiver ran down his spine as the hat was placed on his head.

Interesting, Interesting... The hat mused in his head. At first you are frightened of most everything, but the deeper down you are brave, courageous even. You'd do anything for those you love, even though you're trust is lacking. You'll do best in GRYFFINDOR!

The last word was shouted by the hat and the teacher lifted the hat off his head freeing himself from the presence of so many adults. He immediately fled to the Gryffindor table where the twins were cheering about his sorting and Ron's older brother, and Prefect of Gryffindor, was there to congratulate him. Ron joined them soon after much to his joy. His scar began to prickle, but he brushed it off, it had done so numerous times before, though usually when he was with the Dursley's. He blamed the presence adults for the pain.

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(A/N: I know, Harry's still a Gryffindor, but he was never even considered for Slytherin. Well, the sorting hat said nothing about it. The story will skip around because I'm mainly highlighting what would be different in the main story. Tell me what you think in a review, thank you!)

“So you’re really nervous about our first day of classes?” Ron asked Harry the next morning, the five first year Gryffindors all had talked the night before and were somewhat friends now, Harry had told them that he was far from excited about classes.

“No,” Harry said emotionlessly as they tried to find their way to transfiguration, “I’m frightened.”

“Why? Is it the homework? Or the teachers? I heard that Professor Snape is the meanest teacher ever and-“

“I’ve had some very bad experiences with authority in the past that I would rather not divulge.” Harry said curtly as they found the classroom just as the bell rang for class.

During the class Harry seemed to be fine as long as he wasn’t talked to directly by the teacher. During roll call he simply raised his hand, and seemed content to just to take notes on the lecture. Potions, however, went nowhere near as smoothly.

-

Harry was taking notes in his small, neat handwriting on Snape’s lecture, and he was the only one taking notes. Even the class knew it all Hermione Granger wasn’t taking notes on the ramblings of the sadistic teacher. Unfortunately, Ron wasn’t the only one to notice Harry wasn’t making the appearance of rapt attention. Snape stopped mid-sentence, “Mr. Potter I would appreciate it if you stopped wasting my time and actually listened.”

Harry paled several shades as he met the teacher’s gaze, but his face was as hard as a stone, emotionless. There was a quick glimmer of emotion in his eyes, but it faded into the green quicker than anyone could read it. However, this did not stop Snape from deciding to embarrass Harry in front of the class.

“Perhaps Mr. Potter believes that he doesn’t need to listen? If you know so much, where would you look if I told you to find a bezoar

stone?" Snape asked in a mocking tone. Harry didn't so much as move a muscle.

"Didn't think so, how about the difference between monkshood and wolfsbane?" Again, silence. Hermione didn't even raise her hand to try to save him, and the Slytherins, especially Draco Malfoy, were smirking, "Let's try again, what will an infusion of asphodel and wormwood make." If Ron didn't know any better Harry had been replaced by an extremely lifelike statue.

Snape smirked and turned to the rest of the class, "Apparently someone didn't think to open his books before arriving, five points from-

"Bezoar is from a goats stomach, monkshood and wolfsbane are different parts of the plant aconite, and they make the Draught of the living death." Harry interrupted in a flat voice earning the attention of the entire class, and Snape's steely glare.

"Very good, Mr. Potter, but next time answer when asked and don't interrupt me. Now where was I..."

-

The second they were out of Snape's classroom Harry sighed and began to regain some of the color he had lost during class, "That was rather unpleasant." Harry said in a more normal tone.

"Unpleasant? Harry that was brilliant!" Ron said, then he remembered the stony look he'd had on his face minutes before, "Sorry."

"Don't worry about it, maybe he'll just ignore me." Harry mused.

"I doubt it, once he picks a victim, they're a victim for life." Ron answered dismally, "How'd you know all that anyway?"

Harry's face distorted for a second as if he wasn't fond of the memory, "My adoptive father made me sit in while he worked, he spelled the

books so the muggles couldn't tell they were spell books and let me read them. I read our defense, charms and about half of the potions book."

"You actually like reading?" Ron asked incredulously giving Harry a strange look.

"Eh," Harry shrugged, "Sure beats just sitting for four to six hours."

"Eh," Ron replied, seriously trying to decide in his head which one was worse. He was leaning towards reading being worse.

-

When they were taught to fly brooms Neville got hurt and his remember-all had been taken by Malfoy, and after a somewhat miraculous catch McGonagall came down to apprehend Harry for leaving the ground. When she grabbed his arm to drag him off to who knows where he sharply inhaled as if the touch burned. Turns out he had been welcomed onto the Quidditch team as seeker, which fits his insanely thin body, does he ever eat? Ron thought back to meals, Harry never ate much, sometimes he had nothing more than pumpkin juice.

"Oliver Wood is the captain, he's a bit overzealous if you ask me though." Harry mused at the Gryffindor first years nightly talk, Neville had already sown off his healed wrist.

"How so?" Dean Thomas asked.

"He has this really loud voice and kept on telling me stuff like that I'm the youngest player in a century, Gryffindor can't lose with the all powerful boy-who-lived, it gets annoying quick." Harry said absentmindedly rubbing his forearm where McGonagall had touched.

"Are you okay?" Neville asked nodding at his arm.

Harry seemed to just realize what he was doing and abruptly stopped rubbing, "Yeah, I'm fine, I'm fine..." In truth Cub was very unused to

being touched, especially by adults. It had been three years since he had been under the cruel rule of the Dursleys, and Remus never grabbed him, just light comforting touches like his arm around Cub's shoulders. In Cub's mind he still felt her hand around his arm.

-

"Harry! This isn't our job, we're students for Merlin's sake!" Ron complained, but followed him anyway. It was Halloween and Harry was leading him to fight a troll off of that know-it-all Granger.

"Would she be there if it wasn't for us?" Harry demanded which caused a pang of guilt in Ron, "Besides, she's part of our pack. No one gets left behind."

"Seriously, were you raised by wolves or something?" Ron ignored his first comment.

"Or something covers it pretty well." Harry grinned.

"If you get me killed-"

"I won't."

"I'll kill you."

"You'll already be dead."

"That's not the point, the point is-" He was cut off by a scream that was easily recognized as Hermione. They both sped up, and reached the bathroom in time to save Hermione from the troll, Harry stuck his wand up it's nose and Ron hit it over the head with it's own club. As Harry helped Hermione up McGonagall, Quirrell and Snape walked into the room quickly focusing on the first years.

"What happened here?" McGonagall said expectantly waiting for her students to answer. Harry of course froze at their presence, and when Ron was about to answer, Hermione spoke up.



“I- I thought I could take care of it.” Hermione lied, she had really just been crying because of something Ron had said earlier, Harry seemed to ease off the edginess when he realized her intentions.

“What do you mean Ms. Granger?” McGonagall prompted, but Harry answered a question directly for one of the first times.

“She- she thought she could take care of the troll on her own, me and Ron couldn’t just let her get killed.”

“I was being stupid and they, they saved my life.” Hermione finished.

McGonagall was speechless for a moment, “Ms. Granger, I had thought you would have known better than to go search out death, five points from Gryffindor. As for you two,” Harry stiffened as her gaze locked on the boys, “For being brave, although it was by dumb luck only that you managed to knock it out, I award you five points each for saving your class mate. Now get to your common room while we take care of this mess.”

They all walked out of the bathroom and as soon as they were out of the earshot of the teachers Hermione demanded, “What was that all about? I thought you hated me.”

“I was about to ask the same thing.” Ron snapped back.

“You saved my life! What was I going to do?”

“Save your own butt and let us go down.”

“Maybe I should have!”

“Guys!” Harry interrupted, “We saved Hermione because it was the right thing to do, Hermione repayed the favor by covering for us. Other than that it doesn’t matter. Will you to ever learn to get along?”

“Yes.” “No,” Hermione and Ron said simultaneously. Ron looked at her suspiciously, “Why did you say yes?”

“We’re going to have classes together for seven years, we can’t hate each other the entire time.” Hermione reasoned.

Ron pouted, “Harry, I think that’s the first time I’ve ever seen you directly answer a teacher’s question.”

Hermione thought for a second, “Yeah, it is. Why do you act like this towards the teachers?”

Harry pursed his lips, “You won’t tell, will you?” They both shook their heads.

Harry sighed, “It’s not just teachers, you’ll notice it with every adult I’m with, except a couple of friends that I met when they were younger. I’m quiet to the point of scaring my adoptive father and his co-workers.”

“Why?” Hermione and Ron asked at the same time, neither able to comprehend a life without adults.

“When my parents died I was sent to my Aunt and Uncle’s house, they are muggles that despise all forms of magic. This is the first school I’ve ever really attended, I don’t think kindergarten counted because I went a total of thirty-seven days in the whole year.” Harry noticed their looks of confusion, even though Ron was home-schooled before Hogwarts he knew there was a lot more than thirty-seven days in the school year, “It was so the teachers and students didn’t know about the... the bruises. After that I was pulled out of school with the excuse that I was clinically insane. I ran away two years after.”

“I grew up not trusting adults, and I’m not going to now.” Harry finished. Ron instantly said sorry though Cub couldn’t understand why, it wasn’t Ron’s fault. Hermione was just as sympathetic though showed it more liberally, she hugged him. This of course brought him

back to when he had been taken from his pack, this was something he wasn't ready to tell anyone.

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(A/N: The next chapter will be the mirror of Erised, and it will be very different than the book. Just so you know, Hagrid is friends with the trio because he doesn't act much like an adult, but Harry is still a bit edgy around him. Tell me what you think, but if you insult me, at least have correct spelling!)

Hermione time after time refused to believe that Snape was trying to get past Fluffy, and Hagrid had backed her. Ron still claimed that only Snape could be evil enough to want whatever the teachers were protecting. Harry though along the same lines, "Okay, even if it isn't Snape, Snape is getting himself involved. And someone at Hogwarts is trying to break in and someone headmaster trusts. I think it has to be one the teachers."

"Like you're one to judge, You think all adults are evil, and the teachers are the only adults." Hermione pointed out.

"First of all, I don't recall saying the headmaster or gamekeeper were trying to break in," Harry pointed out earning a groan from Hermione, "Secondly, do you blame me for not trusting adults?"

"Not really, now, can we go back to homework?"

-

Ah, Christmas! Cub thought as he woke up, then he let some old memories of the two best Christmases of his life, those with the pack. They didn't get presents or anything, but they did find these three chestnut trees in a nearby park and would roast them over a fire made in the center of the Pack's 'cave', as they called it. He then realized this year there would be no chestnuts this year, because this year he was at Hogwarts. Remus Lupin had sent him a letter inviting home for the break, Cub immediately sent a letter answering in the negative so he could stay with Ron, his twin brothers and a few others in the Gryffindor tower.

"Oi, Harry!" Ron called out excitedly, yet still managing to sound like he was asleep, "Time to open presents!" The voice was much closer and he felt Ron shake him roughly.

Cub opened his eyes and sat up, sure enough there was a pile of presents at the end of his bed, albeit a small one. Six presents in all, a hand carved flute from Hagrid(who had been there when Harry shared about how Saturdays used to be for him), a green sweater and some Fudge from Mrs. Weasley(Harry was weary of it even

though Ron said that she would never do anything to hurt him), Ron got him a box of chocolate frogs, and Hermione sent him a book on defense against the dark arts (much to Ron's chagrin Harry did enjoy to read books every once in while if they were of use to him). Remus sent a few pictures of Harry's pictures from their time at Hogwarts and a few of the pastries from Remus' work that Cub had liked, though never said a word out loud about it. The last present was strangely light.

"What's wrong?" Ron asked with fudge in his mouth.

"I can't think of anyone else who would give me a present." Cub replied examining the package in question.

"Does it have a tag?"

"No," Harry replied and began unwrapping it despite his worries, a fluid-like silver cloth fell onto his bed eliciting a gasp from Ron. "What?"

"If that's what I think it is—There's only a handful in the world, they're rare and expensive and—"

"What is?"

"I think it's an invisibility cloak, try it on!" Ron pressured, Cub obliged swinging it around his shoulders and looked in the mirror to see a floating head.

Cub admired it for a minute before he frowned at a thought that came to him suddenly, "Who would give me something like this?"

"A note fell out when you picked it up." Ron pointed, still in awe of the cloak.

Harry picked up the slip reading it several times to himself, "It says, 'Your father left this in my possession before he died. It is time it was returned to you. Use it well.' And there's no signature."

“That’s ominous, but at least we know it’s from someone who knew your dad.” Ron shrugged,

“That could mean a lot of people.”

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Idiot, idiot, idiot, idiot, idiot, Cub chanted in his head as he was working on sneaking away from the very nasty, and not to mention angry, potions master who had caught him looking for Nicholas Flamel. Needless to say, it wasn’t going well since he was being chased through various corridors of Hogwarts at half past midnight. He ducked behind a suit of armor and calmed his breathing so it would not alert his predator of his prey. Snape had stopped several feet away, then wearily continued his search for Cub elsewhere.

Deciding the coast was clear Cub stood tiredly only to hear Filch coming from the opposite direction as Snape. To avoid another chase that he knew he was too tired to run in, he took refuge in a nearby classroom. He heard Filch pass the door talking to his feline friend Ms. Norris, which Cub decided he should pity the caretaker for because you had to be pretty lonely to talk to a cat in his mind. Once all trouble was out of his way he finally saw the room around him, the desks were all pushed to the sides with chairs stacked on top, all leaving room for the ceiling high gold framed mirror with strange writing around it that Cub took for a strange code or language.

As if pulled by a mystical(or magical) force, Cub was taken to the spot right in front of the mirror. He saw his reflection, but so much more as well. At first it was just the dark figure that had been like an older brother to him, Sable, the only one to ever be able to relate to him. Ferret then took her place next to him, logical and wise, the guide. Next was Stalker, always slightly mysterious, but he had the brightest smile Cub had ever seen. Lulu appeared next, standing with her arm brushing Sable’s, as if he was in charge of her, although she was the maternal influence in the group, even to Sable. Last was Pyg, his best friend, though Ron had frowned when he said that, Pyg was standing a centimeter away from him. He wanted to hug his best

friend, but as soon as he looked away from the mirror he realized that they were stuck in the mirror.

He looked back at them, all smiling and happy, happier than he would ever be. Stalker mouthed his earlier advice as if reading his mind, "Everything is always okay in the end. If it's not okay, it's not the end." Lulu added her sentiment, "We love you." The all nodded reassuringly in agreement.

The next night Harry brought Ron, who couldn't see the Pack, but himself as Head boy, Quidditch captain and every other Hogwarts achievement. Ron never came back, content with what he had already seen. Harry came back many nights, even quite a few days into the new term, every once in a while the mirror would show his parents as well. He continued visiting until he had an unexpected visitor one night.

"I assume that you, like many other, have found delight in the mirror of Erised." A voice came that made Cub stiffen and turn to face the newcomer. It was Dumbledore, Cub felt himself pale and hoped the darkness would stop the Headmaster from knowing his fear, he said nothing.

"Have you discovered the use of it?" Dumbledore asked as if suspecting Cub to let his guard down and accept him. Harry had guessed the mirror showed what you wanted most, to be with his pack and for Ron to have something over his brothers. The Headmaster continued, "It shows your deepest desire. And though Mr. Weasley was quite talkative about what he saw, you never said what you saw, if you don't mind me asking."

Cub felt like running at the rather personal question even though Remus had tried to coax him into trusting Dumbledore. Cub decided that this one time he should humor Remus, "My Pack, I see my Pack." It came out cold, lifeless and made the elderly Headmaster look very confused. Cub smiled inwardly, Ron and Hermione were the only ones that knew about the Pack, and he wasn't going to tell anyone else anytime soon.

It took a few minutes, but Dumbledore seemed to realize this in the end, "The mirror will be moved by tomorrow, do not go looking for it. In the mean time I believe you should use that marvelous cloak of yours to get back to your dorm."

Cub grabbed his cloak and left the room staying close to the edges of the room farthest from the Headmaster, throwing the cloak over himself. As soon as he left the room he began running from the room, more frightened of the fact that he hadn't been punished than that the Headmaster caught him.

When he was alone Albus Dumbledore couldn't help but say, "What on earth did the Dursleys do to him to make him act like that years after the fact?" The Headmaster sighed, "Perhaps I am becoming an insane old man, here I am talking to myself in an empty classroom in the middle of the night. Definitely too many lemondrops..."

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"Harry, are you okay? You've been acting weird lately." Hermione said in a worried tone one day when they left their defense class.

"Weird? I haven't been acting weird." Harry said defensively, "What have I done that's weird?"

"We can start with the fact that you're rubbing you forehead." Ron answered, apparently him and Hermione had somewhat rehearsed this.

"I have a headache, that isn't weird, is it?" Harry asked.

"On one or two occasions it would be normal, but during and after every Defense class?" Hermione pointed out, and Harry frowned even though he had to admit it was true. "I think you should go see Madam Pomfrey."

"Come on, it's not that bad, I have these all the time... this is just worse and more frequent than usual. And usually it happens after



nightmares.” Harry admitted, he did not want to go get the school nurse’s help.

“Nightmares?” Hermione lifted an eyebrow indicating that she had never heard of the said nightmares.

“Yeah, he has them every once in a while.” Ron agreed, “He had one the first night here, but I assumed it was because he was sleeping on the floor.”

“You sleep on the floor!” Hermione shouted causing several other people in the hall to jump.

“Not anymore, I never did until I got here and Ron made me.” Harry said as if sleeping on a bed was the worse thing in the world to do.

“Okay, back to the headaches, where do they hurt?” Hermione said after a minute of recovery from Harry’s statement.

“Always in the same place, right behind my scar.” Harry indicated the famous scar hidden behind his hair.

“Are you sure the scar isn’t causing your headaches? After all, I read in a book that scars caused by curses can have adverse affects.” Hermione pointed out, even though she knew perfectly well that Ron tuned out every sentence that started with ‘I read in a book that...’

“Honestly, Hermione. Then why would it only happen during Defense. It’s more likely that these headaches are caused by the fact that Professor Quirrell smells like garlic.” Harry argued.

“Harry! You shouldn’t be insulting the teachers like that!” Hermione scolded.

“Then how would you like me to insult them?”

“That’s not what I meant!” Hermione groaned as she slumped into a seat at the Gryffindor table in the Great Hall.

“But Quirrell does smell like garlic. And not in a good way.” Ron interjected.

“And that stutter is so annoying. I vote we sign him up for voice lessons.” Harry sighed as he filled his plate.

“I second that motion!” Ron said, the twins eagerly third and fourthed it because they overheard the last part of the conversation.

Hermione rolled her eyes, “Boys...”

-

(A/N: Okay, I’m trying to make these chapters a little longer. The next chapter will be the whole Sorcerer’s stone challenges... thing. I would like to remind you that Harry only has the protection of his mother’s love as long as he can call his Aunt’s house a home, and he hasn’t for about three years. So Quirrell will meet his demise in a different way than the book, and will traumatize Harry! Wait, that isn’t good... Please review!)

Cub was trying to focus on his exam notes, but all he could manage was lying head down them to somewhat ease the pain his head was causing. So he didn't see his two friends exchange looks of worry before Hermione started in on him, "If it's that bad we'll take you to the Hospital wing so Madam Pomfrey can help."

Cub lifted his head from the table and curtly replied, "No."

"Then we'll talk to Dumbledore, or send Remus a letter. Harry, you're going to fail exams tomorrow if this keeps happening. And it's more than just around Quirrell." Ron said.

"No, we shouldn't bother them." Cub replied, then decided to let them know what he had been thinking, "I don't think it's Snape."

It took a minute for them to realize what Cub was talking about, then Hermione sighed, "Finally..."

"It's Quirrell." Both of them stiffened into a stare at him.

"Harry, that's not-" Hermione began.

"You said my scar might have magical properties, right?" Hermione nodded, "I think it's telling me there's danger. The more it hurts, the closer."

"Okay, then why Quirrell?"

"At first my scar only hurt around him. Next is the troll, he's the one that came in, and you said it yourself, it was stupid to be able to find it's own way into the castle." Cub replied, "And he knows how to get past Fluffy."

"How do you know that?" Ron asked, regarding Cub's last statement.

"Remember at the beginning of the year when Quirrell said he'd spent the last few years in Romania helping friends move the dragons over sea, he has connections where he could get a dragon."

Hagrid bought a dragon from a shady guy in Hogsmeade, which is next to Hogwarts. Would you put it past Quirrell to get Hagrid intoxicated, start talking about animals, sell him a dragon and perhaps get the secret to taming one of his most viscous creatures?" Cub asked them, knowing full well what the answer would be.

"Well, I guess..." Hermione said, "But how do you remember that stuff? It's been months."

"I've always remembered everything just about perfectly. The Pack was surprised I never got lost in London, but it's easy once you get the hang of it." Cub shrugged.

"So how do you get past?" Ron asked.

"Music," Cub smiled, "Hagrid told us it could put just about any canine or feline to sleep, along with some reptiles, but it wakes up snakes."

"So if it works on canines, it should work on a giant three-headed dog." Ron grimaced, "I guess it makes sense."

"We should tell Dumbledore." Hermione said, then frowned.

"He wouldn't believe us, not that one of his precious teachers turned against him." Harry said shaking his head.

"It's not that, I overheard Professor McGonagall and Sprout talking about how suddenly Dumbledore got called off to the Ministry, he won't be back until tomorrow." Hermione said finally realizing what was going on.

"Then Quirrell is going after the stone tonight." Cub summed up out loud, even though all three were thinking it, "I don't plan on letting him."

After Hermione gave a great many suggestions for who to go to instead of going themselves(McGonagall, Flitwick, Sprout, Hagrid, Snape) and Harry gave his opinion on each(No, no, no, no, and God

No!), Hermione and Ron nervously agreed to help him in his quest to save the stone.

-

The first tasks had been easy, growing increasingly harder building up to the chess set that had forced them to leave Ron behind. Now Cub and Hermione stood in the next room, Snape's challenge. Seven bottles, all lined up in a row with a piece of parchment that gave clues. Hermione sighed, "It's logic, something most wizards do not possess, they would be in here forever."

"But we won't, do you have some spare parchment?" Cub asked and began fishing something out of his pocket.

Hermione found a scrap in her pocket, "Yeah, but why do you need- Why do you have a pencil?"

Cub accepted the parchment, "Why wouldn't I have a pencil? This will help me think." He quickly wrote the numbers one through seven on him, he put a small circle underneath three and a larger one on six, Hermione recognized this as his code for the biggest and smallest. He then put Ns on two and six, and Ps on one and five, then circled seven. After that he circled three and put a P next to four. "Three will take us forward, seven will take us back."

Hermione picked up the forward bottle, "It's too small for both of us."

Cub nodded with pursed lips and contemplated the options for a few seconds, "I'll go forward, you go back and get help."

"Are you sure you want to-"

"I'm sure!" Cub snapped, then picked up the smallest bottle with trembling hands, he winced as the mixture slid down his throat and turned his whole body cold.

"Good luck Harry." Hermione said as soon as she was sure it wasn't poison and picked up the bottle at the end.

“Yeah, I’ll need it.” Cub muttered as he walked through the door guarded by black flames.

-

The next chamber was dark and circular, the center and edges lit with candles, and in the middle of it all was two things. The purple turbaned Professor Quirrell and the Mirror of Erised, the gold reflecting light that wasn’t even there. Harry swallowed the lump in his throat and walked down the steps to the circular room, where Quirrell was talking to himself.

“The stone is in this mirror, but how does it work... Heart’s desire?... I don’t see it... I am trying master!” Quirrell’s voice rasped.

Master? Cub froze, He’s not trying to get the stone for himself? Cub very suddenly realized this was bigger than he had presumed it was, and let out a very much audible gasp. Quirrell heard it.

“Ah, Mister Potter. I am surprised to see you here.” All of the stutter was gone from his voice, however the garlicky smell still prevailed.

“Yet, I’m not surprised to see you.” Cub was surprised the words actually came out, he had never been so afraid in his life. Considering how his childhood had gone, that was saying something.

Use the boy... It was a faint whisper, but Cub heard it perfectly. It was somewhat familiar, but not at the same time. Quirrell must have heard it too, for he walked up to Cub and grabbed him dragging him towards the mirror and pushed him the last couple of feet. Quirrell quietly urged him, “You seem to have figured out what’s in here, can you get it for us?”

“What do you mean ‘us’?” Cub asked, still wondering how he managed to have a voice even though he could feel Quirrell’s hand burning into his skin.

Show him... The mysterious voice prompted and smiling Quirrell turned his back to Cub and began unraveling his turban. His scar had been hurting ever since he entered the room, but the pain increased to a throb that made it hard to think. Finally Quirrell removed the last layer of cloth revealing what appeared to be a face, though it was distorted and rather snake-like, looking at it made Cub think that if his scar hurt anymore it would burst. Eww, gross mental picture! Cub pushed it from his thoughts.

“The-boy-who lived,” The face rasped, “The one who reduced me to this shadow of a person, cursed to share a body in order to live. And now the one trying to stop me from getting my own body and immortality.”

The thought suddenly dawned on him, he gritted his teeth and practically growled out the name, “Voldemort.” The one who had killed his parents forcing him to live with them. They didn’t deserve a name, just like Voldemort didn’t deserve immortality.

Voldemort gave a faint smile, “Finally figured it out... Look in the mirror, what do you see?” Through the mental connection he unfortunately had to share with Quirrell, Voldemort informed his slave(I mean, minion) that the boy would be able to obtain the stone and they would steal it from him.

Heart’s desire? Cub thought hazily through the pain, My greatest desire won’t get the stone though, because my greatest desire is to be with the Pack. And I don’t want this jerk, or anyone for that matter, to be immortal. Maybe my greatest desire is to no longer have this headache... Cub decided that he didn’t have much of a choice, especially since Quirrell had grabbed his neck and was forcing him to look into the mirror.

He opened his eyes, first thing he noticed was that Quirrell was not holding his neck, even though he could feel the hand burning his neck. Next he saw a black haired girl with sapphire eyes, Pyg. She came up behind him and hugged him before pulling a stone the color of blood(a color Cub knew only too well) out of her pocket. Mirror-Cub received the stone and put it in his pocket, instantly a weight appeared

in Cub's pocket. He had received the stone, unfortunately he still had the headache.

“What do you see?” Voldemort asked, now very impatient with the eleven year old.

Cub felt another wave of that darned courage and before he could stop himself, “I see my parents that YOU killed.” He lied, but this got past both of the adults.

“Then you have no purpose.” Voldemort said in a cruel tone, like his Aunt's when she was made beyond the point of yelling, “Kill him, finish the job I started ten years ago.”

Within seconds Quirrell had his wand out and was throwing hexes at Cub, who unfortunately had not been taught any shielding charms, so was forced to take refuge for a moment behind the mirror of Erised after being hit with a jelly-legs curse and another he didn't recognize. He pulled out his wand and shouted the first hex he could think of when Quirrell rounded the corner, “Impedimenta!”

Quirrell flew back about ten feet, not wanting him any closer Cub used wingardium leviosa to levitate one of the heavy candelabras. As Quirrell stood Cub pushed the candelabra quickly in his direction and let go of the spell wanting to be ready if Quirrell was going to come back. Fortunately the candle stick hit his collarbone knocking him over and he hit his head hard enough to lose consciousness, and the lit candles caught his clothes on fire. Voldemort was yelling curses at his host body, and they weren't magical curses. After a moment a black circular mist rose and floated through the high ceiling.

Overall, it wasn't a pretty picture, but the garlicky smell was now a pleasant roasted-garlic smell.

And that's when Dumbledore, McGonagall, Snape, Hermione and Remus came in with wands drawn about to protect the boy who lived, who needless to say had the situation well under control. They all looked shocked and quite confused, Dumbledore was first to regain his voice, “Is that professor Quirrell?”



Cub nodded.

“Why is he on fire?”

“He was trying to kill me and had Voldemort in the back of his head. It seemed like a good idea at the time.” Cub answered curtly.

“Oh, dear.” Dumbledore sighed, “I suppose we will need a new Defense teacher.”

“Really?” Snape drawled sarcastically as Remus and Hermione went to Harry’s side and McGonagall and Snape put out what was left of poor Quirrell.

“Are you okay Harry?” Hermione asked in the higher pitched she used whenever she was worried.

“I took the Jelly leg curse, and I’m not sure what he hit me with, but I don’t think my arm should be bending like that,” Which was true considering the middle of his forearm was bent at nearly ninety degrees, “Other than that, I’m fine.”

“We should still get you to the Hospital Wing,” Remus said, Cub’s flinch did not go unnoticed, “Do you trust me to carry you there?”

Cub nodded and allowed himself to drift off due to exhaustion in his guardian’s arms.

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(A/N: Okay, right here Harry’s showing that he trusts Remus, either than or he’s too tired/in too much pain to care. Whichever way you choose to interpret it. I’m also showing that most of the time when Harry is scared out of his wits it’s as if someone is talking for him and getting him in trouble. Also, no one knows he has the stone. In response to a review, he feels pretty well trapped so he can’t go find the Pack. Also in regards to the Pack, in the next chapter Cub will recall a conversation on the matter between him and Remus. Next

chapter the talk with Dumbledore in the Hospital wing, end of the year feast, and the beginning of Summer. Please tell me how you liked that last scene, I'm never sure about the action scenes. I apologize for the humor, but I can't help it. Please review.)

Remus, Hermione and Ron were all waiting to see Harry as the Headmaster spoke to him, and Remus was itching to ask a question, "Does Harry eat?"

"Yeah," Ron replied, Hermione merely nodded her head, "Why?"

"He was really light when I was carrying him, too light for someone his age." Remus elaborated.

"He doesn't eat much, but he doesn't starve either." Hermione answered.

"He said he never has eaten much in his life, so he just naturally doesn't eat much." Ron shrugged, having grown used to most of Harry's strange habits.

The door opened and Albus Dumbledore walked through closing the door lightly shaking his head, "It was just as you said Remus, he doesn't appear to listen to a word I say."

"He listens to more than you think." Ron said flatly.

"And he remembers everything he hears, it can be quite frightening at times." Hermione admitted.

"Either way he has a strong hatred towards adults." Dumbledore said, "Would either of you two know the reasoning behind that?"

"Nope." Both said quickly, unfortunately both were horrible liars.

"Are you going to tell us what you know?"

"No, sir." Ron said, speaking for both of them.

"There was something else too," Dumbledore said, "He got the stone out of the mirror, which I find strange. He told me he saw 'The Pack' when he looked in the mirror of Erised, whatever that's

supposed to mean. Though I assume you two wouldn't know anything about that, would you?"

Hermione both chimed no, although all four knew that they meant yea, but were unwilling to tell their friend's secrets.

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"Hi guys," Harry said coming up between his two fellow Gryffindors. It was the day of the feast, and Gryffindor was in last place, behind first place by one hundred and sixty points. Slytherin had won the house cup again which would make the feast less than enjoyable.

"I didn't know that you'd be out of the Hospital Wing this early." Hermione said questioningly, both her and Ron had been able to escape the whole thing with a few scratches that took minutes to fix.

"Neither did Madam Pomfrey." Harry answered grinning.

"You snuck out!" Hermione yelled eliciting strange looks from many students and a glare from everyone's favorite potions master, though he didn't say anything more.

"Come on Hermione, if you were him would you want to be trapped in a nasty old infirmary with a strange adult?" Ron pointed out, which shut Hermione up, though she was now pouting.

"So how did things with Remus go?" Hermione finally asked.

Harry frowned, Remus had asked if there was something he could do to make him feel more comfortable. Remus had seemed a little surprised at Harry's request, but had said he would see about adopting one of the other of what London called the Tower Bridge Orphans. "They're all gone, have been for months."

"Sorry," Both Hermione and Ron said earning a sad glare from Harry.

"It's not your fault, so don't apologize." Harry told them.

“But Harry, this means they could be anywhere. For all you know they could be in France or Scotland or even America. Chances are you’ll never see them again, I’m sorry because I pity your situation.” Hermione explained.

“You think I don’t know that.” Harry replied venomously, “If only my parents weren’t dead I never would have met the Dursleys and I wouldn’t be too afraid of Remus to have asked about it before coming to Hogwarts. Remus thought I was just going through a strange phase, but you saw my hesitation to let him touch me, he realized I’m traumatized. This is who I am, and stuff like this is how my life works. I’ll get used to it like everything else.”

“Harry, that’s not-“

“Tempus temporus.” Harry cut her off and walked off. Hermione looked questioningly at Ron who shrugged with a similar expression to hers.

-

“Sorry about earlier.” Harry sat down at the table for the feast calmly.

“It’s my fault, I brought up what I should have known was a tender subject with you.” Hermione replied brushing off his tantrum, “Though we are curious about what you said before you left.”

“Oh, Tempus temporus?” His two friends nodded, “It’s latin for time, Sable was very interested latin so studied when he was twelve. The Pack used it as a way to say they needed time alone. Sable used it most, and I used it next often. We’re the most...” He was searching for a word.

“Tempermental?” Hermione suggested.

“Yeah.” Harry nodded, further conversation was cut off by the headmaster beginning the end of the year speech.

After a few of his rantings he got to the standing for the house cup, "In fourth place, Gryffindor, with three hundred and forty-three points. In third, Hufflepuff with three hundred and fifty-two. Ravenclaw has four hundred and twenty-six, and Slytherin is in first with four hundred and seventy-two points."

Even as the Slytherins began cheering the Headmaster interrupted them, "Although I do have some last minute points to award." The Great Hall went silent, "The first to Mister Ronald Weasley for the best-played game of chess Hogwarts has seen in a great many years, forty points to Gryffindor." This was greeted by a great deal of cheering from the Gryffindors.

"Next, for keeping a cool head in dire situations and using what she learned in class for practical purposes, I award thirty points to Hermione Granger." He was of course referring to Hermione's quick thinking with the Devil's snare.

"Third, for Harry Potter, for his use of logic in the face of fire, courage and bravery, I award sixty points for Gryffindor." Hermione and a large portion of the Ravenclaw table began laughing.

"We beat them by one point!" She said over her laughs.

"As some of you have noticed, that gives Gryffindor a total of four hundred and seventy-three points putting them in first." Dumbledore announced with a twinkle in his eyes, the Gryffindors proceeded to cheer very loudly, the Ravenclaw and Hufflepuffs kindly clap, and the Slytherins sulk.

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The train ride home was fairly quiet, the three sharing the compartment were exhausted from being bombarded with questions by everyone(except the teachers and Slytherins). Harry was curled up by the window smiling, and it wasn't the usual weak smile he faked to make him seem okay, both his friends noticed. Hermione asked quietly, "What has you in such a good mood today?"

Harry looked over still smiling, "It's the anniversary of my escape, I've been free for three years."

"If that makes you this happy, I don't even want to know what they did to you." Ron said shaking his head slightly.

"Trust me you don't." Harry said, his voice less ecstatic now, "They really made it much too easy to escape. They left my cupboard unlocked one night and just ran for it, I hitched a ride on a couple of buses, and I was in London, free."

"And then you found the Pack." Hermione added.

"No, they found me, and if they hadn't I would be dead now." Harry corrected, "I can't believe Dumbledore wanted me to go back to them."

"Back to who? The Pack?" Ron asked.

"No, the Dursleys," Harry answered and watched his friends gape at the very thought, "Something about using the protection of my mother's love for me that may resurrect if I go back and spend my Summer with them."

"But they abused you, Dumbledore wouldn't-" Hermione began.

"He doesn't know about that, and I pretty blatantly refused the offer, although I'm not overly fond of Remus I'm at least sure he won't hurt me." Harry said.

"Perhaps Mum will let you come over for part of the Summer, or go shopping with us later." Ron suggested.

"Perhaps."

-

The crowded platform was hard to navigate with their trolleys without rolling over someone's toes, though it was very tempting to roll over some people's toes. After passing a majority of the crowd Hermione found her parents and waved good-bye to her two friends. Cub and Ron easily spotted the large group of red heads, but how couldn't they? Cub noticed that Mrs. Weasley was talking with someone decidedly not a red head, in fact Remus' sandy brown hair wasn't even close to the Weasleys' vibrant red locks. Remus looked tired as well, which didn't surprise Harry being that it was soon after the full moon, something Cub had picked up when his guardian had thought he wasn't listen and was actually absorbing every word into his memory.

Him and Remus said their good-byes to the Weasley clan and headed for the King's Cross parking lot where Remus' boss's car was parked. Remus had never had the need to buy a car since everything he needed was within walking distance, so he had asked if he could borrow his boss's car to drop off and pick up Cub from his 'boarding school'. Terence, being the nice person he was, had agreed that twice a year he would lend Remus his car as long as Remus had his license. As Cub had done on the way to King's Cross six months before, he was sitting in the front passenger seat with his legs hugged to his chest and his chin resting on his knees as he looked out the window. This was his second most comforting position to be in, though the needed a tree which was a rather scarce item in an apartment or a car.

"I suppose you found it rather boring to sit at work every day, didn't you?" Remus said breaking Cub's pleasant thinking.

"A bit, yes," Cub replied, which made Remus, who hadn't been expecting an answer because of the previous summer, jump and almost make an impromptu lane change.

After regaining his composure Remus spoke again, "I don't see any reason why you couldn't spend the time I'm at work at the park down the street."

"There's a park nearby?" Cub questioned.



“Paterson Park is about two blocks down the road.” Remus replied remembering he had never spoken of the park, though he had only passed it a few times before himself, “So what do you say?”

Cub watched him for a full minute with mild interest, deciding in his head whether Remus really meant it, giving him the freedom to spend several hours at the park daily, and alone. Did this mean Remus trusted him not to run away? Not that he would, he was better off with Remus than some random stranger. And after Quirrell he would never trust another Defense teacher again, the memory of Quirrell attempting to kill him was far too vivid for any kind of trust towards anyone similar. Finally Cub decided, “I would like that.”

Remus smiled, he had thought Cub would, knowing the young boy was used to roaming the streets of London, though he did make the rule that Cub wasn't to be more than four blocks from home(to which Cub responded that he didn't see any point in walking further, ten was the farthest the Pack ever went from home) and was to be home in the hours that it was dark or raining. At that comment Cub had raised an eyebrow, “I would think that would be obvious, why be cold and wet if you don't have to be.”

“Sometimes you talk in animal logic, and it confuses me.” Remus sighed.

Cub let out a small, and in Remus' mind uncharacteristic laugh, “Ron and Hermione do claim I was raised by wolves, and I might as well have been.”

When they arrived at their apartment building they began carrying Cub's trunk to their apartment, and were thanking every deity they could think of that their apartment was on the ground level since the stairs would have been interesting to maneuver with the heavy luggage. Once in their apartment Remus used magic to levitate the Trunk into Harry's unused room before making dinner. Harry curled up in his usual spot, basking in the comfort it gave. When dinner was done he ate in quiet, though he didn't eat much, and soon after he said good-night to Remus and headed to his room- Wait, what?

“Are you actually going to your room?” Remus asked in surprise, then cursing himself for speaking in a harsh tone when the boy jumped.

“Is there a problem with that?” Cub asked in a small voice as if fearing the answer.

“No, no problem at all, it’s just odd for you.” Cub relaxed in relief.

“After being forced to sleep in a bed for nine months it would be strange to sleep on the floor again.”

“Forced?”

“Ron.” Cub answered before disappearing into his room for the first time.

Remus relaxed, sure, Harry didn’t completely trust him, but it was better than last Summer. And he was glad Harry was here, because he had been there while Albus had thrown the idea of the blood magic into discussion, Harry had grown rigid and repeated no after everything Albus had said until Madam Pomfrey had kicked them out for ‘exciting her patient’. That’s when both he and Albus had decided that Harry’s behavior was the result of years of abuse from the Dursleys, and they would never be talked about again in his presence.

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(A/N: I formally take back my apology for the humor. For those of you fans of the Pack, the next chapter will be talking about them- A Lot! A few will be returning to the story permanently. For those of you who care, Lynton Road, Tower Bridge and Paterson Park are real places in London, though there are no apartments on Lynton Road. Anyway, please review, because I won’t update without five reviews!)

The sun was shining brightly, as it often did on warm summer days in Mid-June, and Cub was sitting in a spot half shaded by a large ash tree in Paterson Park. To be more accurate he was sitting on one of the branches of the large tree that was not shaded entirely by leaves at eleven o'clock that morning. Leaning against the trunk of the tree with one leg on either side Cub thought back to old Saturdays focusing on the tunes in particular, then pressed the wooden flute he had brought with him to his lips and began playing. He wasn't as good as Sable or Stalker, but after a bit of practice he could recreate their mesmerizing song. No one ever noticed what he did in the park, only two people did today though Cub didn't know it yet.

A routine had quickly fallen into place for the Summer, he and Remus would wake up at about seven in the morning and eat breakfast, usually cereal or toast. Then Remus would walk across Reverdy Road to get to the bakery and Cub would walk the opposite direction down Lynton Road past Welsford street and just past Monnow Road on the right was the park. There Cub would either watch the clouds or sit in the tree and play his flute or think. When Remus got off work, somewhere between noon and one in the afternoon, half past the hour at the latest, he would bring lunch down to the park where they would have a picnic lunch and walk home where they would read or play chess(which Cub won most of the time) until dinner. Then they would go to bed and start the process over again.

It was a relaxed schedule, but it worked. Remus and Cub rarely talked, but Cub at least made it look like he was participating in conversation, and he was smiling more, even though he missed the Pack dearly. Remus had apologized exactly seventeen point three times about them being gone, it would have been eighteen had Cub not cut him off mid sentence telling him that he didn't blame Remus for the loss of his friends, he blamed himself. Remus apparently was attempting to solve this problem by not reminding Cub about them, but he thought about them every day. Occasionally Remus would try to distract Cub with a story on his parents and godfather, though he had only mentioned his godfather once.

Flashback

“...Because of their animagus forms we called Peter Wormtail, your father Prongs and your godfather Padfoot, though he was partial to being called Snuffles.” Remus had said one night.

“You said Wormtail and Prongs are dead, what about Padfoot?” It was one of Cub's few questions that he ever asked.

Remus shifted uncomfortably making Cub think he had said something wrong, “Sirius... Sirius is in jail for something horrible. He betrayed your parents to Voldemort and killed Peter. He betrayed us all and is in Azkaban for it.”

Cub realized that this would be like Ferret or another member of the pack handing them all in, killing them, sending him to the Dursleys... It was unthinkable and wrong on so many levels. He didn't blame Remus the least bit for not wanting to talk about it. Cub offered a sentence he hoped would come off as comforting, “He deserves to be.”

Remus smiled in understanding.

End Flashback

Harry was too absorbed in thoughts to realize that two people had moved to under his branch of the tree. The younger looked to the other for permission, the elder nodded to answer in the affirmative. The younger thought for a few seconds before calling above the sweet music Cub was playing, “But, soft! What light from yonder window breaks? It is the East and Juliet is the sun.”

This had rather catastrophic consequences. First, startled by the noise, and the familiarity of it, dropped his flute and in attempt to recover it ended up upside down holding on to the limb with his legs and the flute in his hand. Cub then looked down to the girl ten feet below him, which made him lose all control of his body and fell, landing on his head of course. He quickly moved so he was sitting on the ground looking up at her, leaning back on his palms. He stumbled on words for a minute, “Pyg?”

“Ah, Cub, as eloquent and graceful as always. Of course it's me.” The black haired girl replied offering a hand to help him up. Cub took it still in awe, she was quite a bit taller, though not even close to his height. Her eyes were brighter than he had ever seen and her hair was clean and brushed for the first time that he had ever seen. She no longer wore too big hand-me-downs, but a pair of jeans and a yellow tank top that contrasted beautifully with her hair. Before another word could be said he wrapped her in his arms in a tight embrace, just like the one they had shared a year ago, but much happier.

“Well, someone's happy.” Said a sarcastic drawl, it was a voice that hadn't changed a bit in the year. He was wearing ragged jeans and a t-shirt, he was never one to give up the rebel look. It took a minute to realize it was actually Sable, he had shaved his beard and mustache off and cut his hair so it looked more mature. Cub didn't even hesitate to hug the older man. Meanwhile, Pyg had moved to pick up the long forgotten flute, so she was prepared when Cub asked how they had found him. She just smiled, “Cub, when we heard this music we had to find out where it was coming from. And we were more than pleasantly surprised to find you. Where did you get this anyway?”

Cub blushed lightly, “I'm in a special boarding school and have made some new friends, this was a Christmas present. I spent all day Christmas thinking about the chestnuts.”

“What kind of boarding school?” Pyg asked as if insinuating something.

“Pyg...” Sable said warningly.

“I told you, I think he's going there too! You remember Saturdays!” She argued, Cub suddenly realized she was a witch, it hadn't been just him with the ability to control the emotions of others.

“Let me guess, someone had to come to explain why you were being invited to attend a school because of your special abilities.” Cub asked and saw her face light up.

“Hogwarts.” She whispered, Sable was cradling his head in his hand whispering something about Pyg’s apparent lack of ability to keep secrets.

“Yep, apparently my guardian is a wizard too, he’s also a...” He paused, “A tame werewolf.”

“You live with a werewolf!” Sable yelled, though quietly enough no one would hear. Cub could understand his reaction, him and Sable were more or less brothers, really close brothers to be exact.

“He’s a tame werewolf.” Cub repeated, knowing this was going to be difficult.

“What if he loses control and eats you!” Cub noted that Sable and Pyg probably weren’t up to date on the latest potions.

“He takes a potion that makes him able to control himself.”

“Let me ask you this, can you throw him?” Sable said slowly.

“No...” Cub replied just as slowly.

“Then don’t trust him!” Sable said curtly.

“He’s a friend of my father’s that knew me before I was with the Dursleys, his honor to his friend is just as strong as ours.” Cub argued, though very calmly, “Besides, he knows my feelings towards adults, I barely talk to him, and he has accepted the fact that I don’t always eat.”

Sable sighed and relented, Cub finally asked, “So where is the rest of the Pack?”

Both of them sighed, Sable finally answered, “Let’s go to our apartment, we’ll tell you on the way there and we can talk about your... boarding school... when we get there.”

“Works for me.” Cub replied as they began walking South on St. James’s Road.

“Well as you could guess, Lulu lives with us.” Sable began.

“Where is she then?” Cub asked.

“At work, she works across the Hall for Old .” Pyg said.

“And Pygmy(A/N: This is Pyg’s real nickname, they just call her Pyg for short) used to go to the street on Rolls Road.”

“How about Ferret?” Cub asked.

“Ferret, poor girl, since we had no money and she couldn’t get a job she was sent to live with her Grandparents.” Sable sighed, Cub didn’t see what was so bad, couldn’t they just visit her?

“In America.” Pyg added, now Cub saw the problem.

“In some city called Logan, Kansas.” Sable shook his head.

“Dare I ask about Stalker?” Cub said rather unsure whether he really wanted his question answered.

“He was adopted after me and Ferret were gone.” Sable answered frowning.

“We have reason to believe that he is now in Scotland...” Pyg answered.

“Or Ireland.” Sable added.

“Or France.”

“Norway.”

“Perhaps China.”

“Like eight different families were looking at him for adoption, we have no idea where he is.” Sable finished.

“Poor Stalker,” Harry said remembering what it was like to live with someone you had never met in your life, and in half those countries he would have to learn a new language, not that Stalker wasn't capable.

“Yeah, we're going left here.” Sable announced and they turned onto Argyle way and walked into their apartment building.

-

Okay enough about where Hogawarts is,” Pyg said impatiently, making both Sable and Lulu(who had been recently freed from work) chuckle lightly, “What about the teachers?”

“McGonagall is the transfiguration teacher, she's a bit strict but won't bother you if you do your work, Snape is the potions and unless you're in Slytherin he'll pick on you for the fun of it, Flitwick and Sprout are rather easy going, Hagrid is the Gamekeeper and pretty much a big kid, especially since he's half giant. And the Headmaster has this illusion in his head that he knows everything and that everyone will trust him, which makes it very easy for me to get on his nerves.” Cub replied somewhat cheerfully.

“You were talking about some sort of defense class too.” Pyg pointed out.

“Defense Against the Dark Arts, and I don't know who the teacher is, apparently there's a curse on the job so a reason always comes up for them to stop teaching.” Cub answered.

“What happened to the last one?” Lulu asked him.

“I killed him.” Cub replied blushing a little.



“Are you kidding?” Sable gasped with the girls looking surprised, Sable had a somewhat prideful look on his face. It was the same look he gave whenever they asked about Sable’s parents, it was kind of creepy.

“He was trying to kill me, was I supposed to let him?” Cub argued.

“I guess not.” Lulu sighed, “What about your friends?”

“Hermione is a muggleborn like Pyg, and my mum was too from what I’ve heard. Ron is the youngest of six boys in his family and has a younger sister, his whole family is magic. They’re the only ones that know about my time at the Dursleys or about the Pack. Although several people have asked if I was raised by wolves.” Cub told them.

“And how do you reply to such a question?” Sable asked with an unfeigned look of curiosity on his face.

“I told them that I pretty much was.” Cub grinned.

“Oh God...” Lulu groaned, but both Pyg and Sable began laughing.

“Come on Lulu, we all know that we might as well have been animals.” Sable told her.

“I will not have myself labeled as an animal!” Lulu huffed.

“What’s wrong with being labeled as an animal? It gives an excuse for our terrible manners.” Pyg was now smirking, oh, how she loved to bother her older sister.

“I, for one, do not have terrible manners.” She looked down at her watch, “It’s almost time for me to go back to Mrs. Thompson’s to make her dinner, you three behave.”

Cub looked shocked and looked down at his watch letting two words slip from his now frowning mouth, “Oh, shit.”

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(A/N: Sorry about the cliff hanger, but I wanted to get this posted after so many reviews. For the few of you that guessed that Pyg is a witch, you guessed correctly. Ferret will be back much later, but I doubt that Stalker will be seeing as he is in Scotland, Ireland, France, Norway or China. Please review!)

“What’s wrong?” Sable asked, knowing that Cub was not one to use swearing lightly.

“Several things, to start off I was supposed to meet Remus at the park at one. It’s half past four,” Cub replied, unusually stiff.

“That is a bit of a problem.” Lulu commented.

“I’m also supposed to be home when it’s raining.” Cub motioned to the window where it clearly showed what seemed like a sea of water coming down on the streets, “I’m also not supposed to go farther than four blocks from home.”

“Where exactly is home?” Sable asked trying to estimate the amount of trouble his friend was in.

“Corner of Lynton and Reverdy Road.” Cub answered.

“About eight blocks, well, that’s not good.” Sable said frowning, noticing that Cub’s first move had not been to move as if to leave, but to lean back in his seat on the floor and hit his head repeatedly on the arm of the couch behind him. Sable recognized this, it was fear of punishment because of past experiences. And there was no running away, Cub had explained that the entire wizarding world considered him special and their savior going missing would not be taken lightly, and if he ran away he couldn’t go back to Hogwarts.

After a few minutes Cub quietly said, “My window is open.”

Sable cocked an eyebrow, “Are you thinking what I think you’re thinking, because if you are I would like to inform that I think you’re mental.”

“It’s not like he’ll know!” Cub argued.

“What are you two talking about?” Pyg demanded.

“He wants to sneak in his room and pretend he was there the whole time, like the werewolf will buy that.” Sable rolled his eyes.

“It’s worth a try.” Cub sulked.

“You could just tell him the truth.” Lulu offered, Cub frowned at the very thought.

“How about I try my idea and if it fails-“ Cub began.

“Which I assure you it will.” Lulu interjected.

“I’ll tell the truth, though I would prefer not to.” Cub finished, while standing up.

“Come on, I’ll walk you home.” Sable said grabbing his coat and leading Cub, but allowing Cub to dawdle as much as he wanted to in the rain.

Worry was tugging at his stomach, or it may be hunger seeing as his and Harry’s lunch lay forgotten on the counter as Remus sat on the couch trying to think of what to do.

He remembered almost four hours ago he had left work and began walking to the park, clouds were rolling in, but it was far from raining. When he noticed that Harry wasn’t under or in the tree he was usually found in Remus was only slightly concerned. He began to worry when Harry wasn’t in the park at all and decided Harry must have thought it was going to rain, so returned home. Remus began to worry when he didn’t see Harry in the living room, after spending a ridiculously long time searching the small apartment calling Harry’s name he finally allowed the idea that Harry was not there to sink in.

Remus proceeding over the next two and a half hours to alternate between searching a four clock radius of the apartment and checking the apartment itself. By then not only had the rain come, but the streets had become shallow rivers. Remus resigned himself to the fact that Harry wouldn’t be walking around in rain like this, and if he was Remus wouldn’t see him if he was beyond a few feet. While

sitting at home letting his worries fester he realized there wasn't much he could do to find Harry at the moment, him and the rest of the orphans had kept themselves from being caught for years as a group, one person could slip away far more easily. Alerting the magical world wasn't a good idea either, first of all he wasn't technically supposed to be caring for children since he was a werewolf and was afraid some person from his school days might bring it up if something happened to Harry while in his care. Also, it would cause a lot of unnecessary ruckus about the savior of the magical world going missing.

Remus was unable to keep the idea of Harry having run away out of his head, though with their largely improved relationship he doubted that was the truth. Harry had been here for almost three weeks, why run away now? He tried to reason that Harry had probably just got caught in the rain and had found shelter that he refused to leave(that boy avoided rain like the plague). Yes, that must be the reason for his absence!

"Okay, I have to admit that is a bit taller than I thought it was." Cub said looking at the windowsill, which was at chest height. This was about eight inches taller than Cub could throw his leg over to climb up, which had been tested several times already having less than satisfactory results.

"Good thing I haven't left yet, isn't it?" Sable said smiling as he crouched down and held his two hands out for Cub. Bracing himself on the windowsill he put his left foot on Sable's hand, then Sable lifted him almost two feet off the ground so he could throw his right leg into the room. He overshot a little so slid through the window and onto the floor with a loud thump.

Remus jumped, That was a rather odd noise. He mused thinking about how close it sounded to a raw turkey being thrown on the wood floor. Remus preferred not to think about how he'd known what that sounded like, it was the worst Thanksgiving ever. Like anyone in his right mind, Remus stood and moved towards the source of the noise, Harry's room. He opened the door revealing what would have been a

perfectly normal scene. Harry was lying on his bed reading his Herbology book.

“So where have you been this afternoon?” Remus asked in a harsher voice than he usually used, and he saw Harry stiffen then look him in the eyes.

“I’ve been here the whole time.” Harry said in the emotionless voice he carried last summer.

“No you haven’t, I’ve been searching for you for hours.” Remus said, bothered by the fact that Harry was so blatantly lying, “Besides, you’ve obviously been out in the rain, your shirt hair and glasses are wet. Would you care to revise your answer?”

Harry slowly closed his book, “I’ve been out.” Harry replied with deliberate slowness.

“I would believe that we have made that fact obvious, where is ‘out’?” Remus asked growing rather annoyed as he sat on the edge of Harry’s bed, Harry recoiled to a sitting position a couple feet away from him. Harry hadn’t shown this much mistrust since the first night, he was frightened.

“W-with the Pack.” Harry stuttered.

“Who’s the Pack?”

“The family I never had, they saved my life. I spent the afternoon at their house.”

Remus finally understood, the dark haired man that glared, the short haired woman, the blonde girl, the tawny haired boy, and the small black haired girl from the orphanage. He had found them, “They’re all here?”

Harry looked surprised by the question, but answered, “No, just Sable, Lulu and Pyg, Ferret is in America and Stalker could be just about anywhere.”

“Strange names.” Remus commented, no longer angry, more relieved that Harry was not only okay, but his friends lived nearby.

“We didn’t even know each other’s real names until last year when we got caught, they call me Cub.”

“Kind of like the Marauders and our nicknames.”

“Kind of, so you aren’t mad?” Harry asked seeming very reluctant to come closer to Remus.

Remus sighed, “You met up with old friends, went to their house and lost track of time, next thing you knew it was late and raining, I can’t hold that against you.”

“Even if I tell you I was further than four blocks away?”

“How much farther?”

“Argyle Way.”

Remus crossed his arms and thought, “Would I seriously expect you to not go with them, even if they lived in Timbuktu?”

“Probably not... Though we might find Stalker.” Harry said thoughtfully making Remus chuckle.

“It would be useless to try to keep you from your friends, so just tell me before you go visit them, and next time wear a coat if it’s raining.” Remus said and moved to get up.

“Remus?” Harry asked softly.

Remus turned, “Yeah?”

“Pyg has gotten a Hogwarts letter, I offered to pay for her school stuff and show her to Diagon Alley.” Harry said as if asking permission.

Remus just looked at him for a minute, “The Pack is a good name for you guys, you really take care of each other.”

“Just don’t tell Lulu you approve of comparing us to animals, she loathes the very idea.” Cub said smiling.

“Well, I guess our lunch is now dinner, change into a dry shirt before coming out.” Remus said and left the room smiling.

Cub was sure Remus didn’t even know that he was avoiding touch again, even though he knew Remus was tame and would never hurt a fly(unless said fly was trying to kill him, then he would in self defense) Cub felt uneasy near him after seeing the werewolf mad. He had mentioned the night before that he was going to go visit the Pack today to ensure them he was okay, even if he was shaking a bit. Remus was curious about meeting them, so told Cub to invite his Pack-mates to lunch at the small café where he usually got their lunches. Cub was fully aware what could possibly go wrong, especially with Sable who made very bad first impressions, and knowing him that could include death threats, anger issues or his pocket knife buried in something(usually a wall or table, he claims it has only killed one person and he would prefer it kept that way).

He made his way through the streets of London at eight in the morning towards the Pack’s apartment on Argyle Way. Cub had taken his time to give the Pack time to get up before he came to invade their space, though he doubted they would really mind the intrusion. The door was easy to find, second floor across from the stairs, he knocked three times and waited. He heard incoherent mutterings about loud knocking at ungodly hours of the morning before the door opened revealing Sable in his night clothes rubbing his eyes, “So are you in the process of running away?”

“No, just came to visit.” Cub assured him, he chuckled slightly when Sable looked disappointed for a split second before ushering him in.



“Pyg’s just getting dressed, she’ll be out in a minute, Lulu’s at work, and I’m still asleep, so make yourself comfortable.” Sable said before walking out of the room.

Before he knew it him and Pyg were talking about Hogwarts in general, more specifically quidditch, something Pyg found absolutely fascinating. When Sable had showered and had deemed himself ‘somewhat awake and sociable’ he told them about they’re invitation to lunch. Pyg looked at Sable who looked rather contemplative, “We’ll go, but Lulu can’t make it. And I’m mostly saying yes so I can see this werewolf guardian you have.” Something in his voice implied he would probably end up saying something to the effect of “If you hurt Cub I’ll (Insert a death threat that is extremely violent here).”

About half an hour before lunch they set off to meet Remus(Lulu had of coarse been informed of their plans before they set out) they took their time walking at a leisurely pace. During their walk he convinced Sable and Pyg that it wasn’t important that Remus know that they know he was a werewolf. They got to Monnow Road they saw Remus across the street, Sable was very hesitant to cross the street to the werewolf but did any way. Other than a quiet hi and a nod of greeting they did not interact with each other, and after getting sandwiches Sable grudgingly let Remus pay for his, though the scowl on his face clearly showed he was not fond of the gesture.

At lunch they spoke quietly, Sable was introduced as Nigel and Pyg was introduced as Vaughn, Remus introduced himself and kept the question of which nicknames they belonged to in his head. Half way through the meal Remus finally asked Harry why Sable was staring at him in the cynical way he was. Harry just smiled and whispered, “He’s imagining you dying in horrible ways, he’s not really happy that you took me away.”

Other than that, Sable was able to stay civil, his conversation being much more pleasant than the glare constantly on his face. When they were done eating they continued to talk for another half an hour, Pyg hugged both Harry and Remus, Sable hugged Harry but only gave Remus a letter. Then the four walked home, Sable and Pyg behind Remus and Harry as if keeping an eye on Remus’ every move,

Remus noticeably relaxed when he entered the building, escaping from Sable's eyes. Harry relaxed on the couch as Remus pulled out a chair from the table, "Nigel is Sable, right? And Vaughn is Pyg?"

"Yep." Harry replied smiling.

"Nigel is... intimidating."

"He isn't good at first impressions, or second, or... He just doesn't give people a good impression. Once you get to know him he's a great person... as long as you're on his good side."

"And am I on his good side?"

"I'm not sure, read the letter." It was a command, no room for mistaking what he wanted. Remus unfolded the letter and began reading.

Dear Mr. Remus J. Lupin,

I don't want you to take this the wrong way, I do not like you. At all. I just feel as if it's fair that you know what kind of hell you've brought yourself into by adopting my Cub. I don't have exact details, but you'll have a better idea of what's going on.

Me and him had very similar childhoods. You already know Harry's parents were murdered when he was a child, my mother was killed by my father when I was two, in front of me. That left me in the care of my abusive, alcoholic ass of a father. I was beaten and abused for nine years until I couldn't take it anymore, so was Harry. Harry took the innocent route and ran away, I took it into my own hands that he didn't hurt anyone else with the knife I keep in my back pocket. Neither of us are going to forgive adults anytime soon, give him the space to grow accustomed on his own, stress could easily make him a murderer.

We refer to ourselves as the pack for a reason, the older ones protect our young, and since you have my Cub I will not hesitate to strike you down if you lay a finger on him. Regardless of your 'furry little

problem'. I swear on my mother's grave that if your actions, or the actions of a wizard causes his death my blade will take it's revenge, and I will feel no regret. I repeat, I am not your friend. Just an ally for my Cub's sake.

-Nigel Evron Hawthorn

Cub was getting concerned, as his guardian had read the letter he had grown steadily paler. In a soft voice as not to scar him he asked, "Is something wrong?"

Remus opened his mouth, but the words seemed to stick in his throat.

"Let me guess," Cub said, "He in some way helped you and threatened your life at the same time."

"Yeah, how did you know?"

"It's just the way he is."

(A/N: For those of you wondering, I explained Sable's somewhat scar comment in the last chapter about killing parents. He and Harry were the abused ones, the other four are orphans by natural causes(OK, Stalker's parents were killed in a forest fire while camping when he was at Summer camp elsewhere). For some extra information on later plans, see my profile page, which I updated today. Please review, I don't know what to elaborate on if I don't know what questions you have.)

“Does Nigel ever smile

“Does Nigel ever smile?” Remus muttered as Harry, Vaughn and him got in the car to head to Diagon Alley. Sable had to work when the Weasleys and Grangers had decided to make their trip, and Sable knew everything would go a lot smoother if he let Remus take his adopted daughter (making both Pyg and Lulu Hawthorns). However, while dropping Pyg off before heading to work he was glaring at Remus.

“Yeah, all the time.” Vaughn replied cheerfully, “He just doesn’t like you.”

“I had gotten a distinct feeling he didn’t.” Remus said monotonously making the two kids crack up. As planned, the three of them, the three Grangers and a majority of the Weasley clan met up at the leaky cauldron. The adults began introducing themselves to each other, while Harry did quick introductions.

“Vaughn, this is my friend Ron Weasley, and this is Hermione. Their the two friends I told you about earlier. And this is Ron’s little sister Ginny that will be in your year,” He told the eleven year old holding his hand, “And this is Vaughn, my best friend for the past three years.”

They all made their ways into Diagon Alley, talking cheerfully all the way, Harry, Ron and Vaughn split off to get money from Gringotts and to get Vaughn’s wand afterward while everyone else had decided to save a spot in line for Gilderoy Lockhart’s books. This time Harry wasn’t nearly as creeped out by goblins bustling around the wizard bank, Vaughn was at a loss for words being completely awestruck for them, occasionally saying they were beautiful. This from the girl who thinks Aye ayes(yes, it’s an actual animal, look it up if you don’t believe me) are the worlds cutest animal, followed by the Narwhal. She really needs some help when it comes to beauty in animals/creatures.

After getting plenty of money for shopping they headed to Ollivanders to get Vaughn a wand. The shop had a musty smell and was

ominously dark, you could hear the faint sound of the shelf ladder moving a few feet, stopping for a moment, then moving in the opposite direction. After a moment of trying to decide what to do Vaughn pointed to a bell on the counter, after a nod from the boys she gently pressed the little bell. It was silent for a second before the room was filled with chiming, that strangely enough sounded like a grandfather clock. After it stopped ringing Vaughn shook her head as if to get the ringing out of her ears, "That was rather odd."

"Many say that, but I haven't the faintest clue why." Ollivander said, having stepped away from the never ending back of the shop, making Harry involuntarily shiver. The first time meeting any adult was always the worst.

"Right, no clue." Ron said rolling his eyes.

"I assume this young lady has come to get a new wand, seeing as I remember both of you receiving wands just last year." Ollivander said softly.

"Yes," Vaughn said, her eyes shining. The man retreated to his large wall filled with wands, and unlike Harry, Vaughn had no measurements taken of her. Harry scowled, Sure, don't measure the one who doesn't freeze every time she meets an adult, and torture the one who does.

Ollivander returned carrying three boxes, he carefully opened the first box and handed it to her, "Ten and a half inches, elm wood with a unicorn tail core."

Vaughn took the wand and waved it(although she had stood with a confused look on her face until Harry told her she was supposed to wave it), as soon as she did about twenty boxes of wands more or less exploded from the wall. She held the wand as far away from herself as she could as if it was evil, and set it gingerly on the counter.

As Ollivander returned it to it's box he muttered, "That won't do, let's see... eleven and three-eighths inches, alder wood with phoenix feather core."

This wand was no better, and over the course of the next seven wands Pyg managed to light three fires, cause a small explosion, pull more boxes of wands off the shelf, create a very high pitched sound, set Ron's hair on fire, and crack Harry's glasses, the damage done by the final two Ollivander fixed with his own wand. Now feeling slightly flustered at his lack of success, Ollivander began talking to himself, "Very finicky, often causes fire, yet the harder woods don't seem to react well... I wonder..." With that Ollivander disappeared for what seemed to be the hundredth time.

"Does he ever finish his sentences?" Pyg asked, the two boys shook their heads as Ollivander returned with a light blue box.

As he began opening it he talked, "This wand is an... unusual combination, only one of its kind, exactly eleven inches, willow tree wood with dragon heartstring core. dragon string is never found in a wood as soft as willow," he handed her the wand.

Pyg looked at it for a moment that flicked her wrist as she had done the previous nine times, making all three males flinch as if they had been expecting something to explode or burst into flame, and they had reason to considering their previous experience. Instead glittery sparks emerged from the end of the wand, harmlessly. All three boys relaxed, Ollivander commented quietly, "It seems we have found a wand for you."

Harry paid for her wand and the three made their way to Flourish and Blotts to meet up with the rest of their group, and when they arrived were questioned about how they had been goofing off because they had taken far too long, seeing as they were nearly to the front of the line. Remus and Mrs. Weasley believed them once they told them how troublesome it had been to find the right wand for Pyg, who was smiling triumphantly, basking in the glow of having an odd wand.

"It can't be." A voice exclaimed causing the shop to grow quiet and turn to Cub, who panicked at the attention of so many adults,

especially that of a blonde wizard wearing light blue robes and a scarily wide smile, "The-boy-who-lived himself."

Without any word of preparation the strange wizard grabbed Cub's arm and whisked him to the middle of the shop so the optimum amount of adults could stare at him. Molly Weasley had now recognized the man as Gilderoy Lockhart. Lockhart told Cub to smile for the cameras, but all he got was the look of shock Cub still had from being grabbed and taken from his friends. Gilderoy did not notice at all, "I feel this is the best time to make my announcement..." The man began.

"This will not make Cub happy." Pyg said softly.

"What won't?" Remus asked startled by her sudden comment.

"I didn't say anything." Pyg said looking confused.

"This year I will be teaching at Hogwarts as the Defense Against teacher." Lockhart finished putting a hand on Cub's shoulder, which in hindsight wasn't his smartest move. It seemed to knock Cub out of his frozen trance-like state, he jerked his shoulder back with a vigor knocking the man's arm into the wall behind the two of them, then kicked him in the shin in the same movement. Before anyone could say anything the twelve year-old had disappeared into the cloud leaving some pretty shocked people.

"I didn't know Harry could run that fast." Remus said in surprise and shock.

"I haven't seen him run so fast since the day of our incarceration." Vaughn mused thoughtfully thinking back to running from the police before inevitably getting caught.

Lockhart was of course able to talk his way out of the situation by saying something about his overwhelming fame, Remus felt it bet not to say that he hadn't heard of him until Harry got his book list, and from skimming through one he thought the entire series was a load of crap. Lockhart tried to by them off by giving both Harry and Vaughn

the books for free, and later Harry insisted paying for one of the Weasleys' sets because he didn't want to take any charity from Lockhart. That was, of course, after they found him.

After about twenty minutes they found him in the apothecary buying what new ingredients he needed for potions looking completely calm, much to everyone's surprise. Other than the fact that Harry was fairly quiet for the rest of the trip, it went normally except for Mr. Weasley and Mr. Malfoy having an altercation. In fact, Harry didn't talk until Pyg told Sable they had met the new defense teacher.

"Really?" Sable said.

"Yeah, but I don't think I made a good impression." Cub replied.

"And why is that?"

"If I remember correctly, I slammed his hand into a wall and kicked him in the shin."

Sable burst out laughing, "For the fun of it, or was there a reason?"

"He touched me," Cub answered eliciting another burst of laughter from Sable.

"Just don't kill him, I think they'll get suspicious." Sable said in valiant attempt to stop laughing.

"Much worse will happen in the year to come, we'd all be safer if we just stayed home." Pyg said flatly getting everyone to stare at her.

"What was that?" Cub asked.

"What was what?" Pyg had the same look on her face she had had at Flourish and Blotts.

"You just said bad things are going to happen and we'd all be better off staying at home." Cub repeated her words.



“I said no such thing!” She defended herself harshly.

“Actually, you did.” Sable said, “Are you feeling okay? Perhaps you’re having memory lapses.”

“I feel fine, you’re all hallucinating.” Pyg had lowered her voice dangerously.

“If one person disagrees with you, they’re wrong, if everyone disagrees with you, you’re wrong.” Cub said looking at her worriedly.

Pyg growled, though it didn’t sound nearly as dangerous as when Sable and Cub made the same noise, the primitiveness of the sound just wasn’t there. She and her guardian left soon after when he suggested it was because of her sleepless nights as of late and she was just overtired.

(A/N: I know, this chapter is rather short, but very important. Notice, Harry hates Lockhart(as do I). Put in your reviews what you think is wrong with Pyg, all of you cheaters can get the answer from my newly updated profile page. And yes, Dobby will not really be here, I had too many plot issues if I had him. Just review.)

“Excuse me, may I join you?” Said a young girl, obviously a first year by her size and the fact no one recognized the blonde who had the most peculiar earrings she that she would later claim were the claws of crumple-horned snorkacks. After a general nod from around the room the young girl took a seat next to a black haired girl who was staring out the window braiding a few strands of her hair out of boredom, next to her was a boy about the same size, though obviously older by his worn look. Luna Lovegood would have named them siblings right off the bat, but to closer inspection they didn’t share any kind of resemblance other than their midnight black hair, her eyes were a deep sapphire and his were decidedly emerald.

The boy in the middle of the seat across from them and the girl staring out the window were definitely siblings, both had dark brown eyes, freckles and flaming red hair marking themselves as part of the Weasley clan. However the girl straight across from her was different than all the others, wavy brown hair, fair skin, rather than the black haired kids’ tan colored, and she had a look about her that gave her an intelligent look, the others had it hidden, and the red haired boy might possibly lack intelligence all together. She smiled as she mused over these things, “My name is Luna Lovegood, and you guys are?”

“Ginny Weasley.” The red head smiled.

“Ron Weasley,” Her brother muttered in testimony that he, like many others, thought they had to get up far too early to catch the train.

“Hermione Granger.” The brown haired girl replied rolling her eyes at the boy and returning to the book she held in her hands,

“Vaughn Hawthorn,” The other girl replied, her eyes never leaving the scenery outside the window.

“And I’m Harry Potter.” The last boy sighed seeming to prepare himself for unwanted praise.

“It’s very nice to meet you all, I haven’t met any other witches or wizards before coming here.” Luna had of course heard of the great

Harry Potter, but thought it would be rude to clamor over his fame, it had to get annoying after a while. As they got closer to Hogwarts conversation began and inevitably ended on Quidditch, seeing as both the Weasleys and Harry played and Vaughn seemed rather excited by the subject. Hermione seemed to give up on them completely and turned to her book, so Luna decided to bring out her copy of the latest issue of the Quibbler.

Upon arriving at Hogwarts the three second years went off to the carriages while the first years went with the Hagrid the half-giant. He told them to get in the boats, four to a boat, Luna, Ginny and Vaughn were joined by a rather energetic boy who talked so fast they didn't understand a word he said. Vaughn was obviously annoyed, Ginny had to stop her from pushing him into the lake, though she looked as if she was on the verge of doing the same.

After a moment in the Entrance Hall we were brought into the great Hall where we were sorted. Several people they didn't know were sorted, including Colin Creevey who was now Gryffindor and was bugging Harry at the table. Finally the stern woman at the front by the stool holding the sorting Hat called, "Hawthorn, Vaughn."

Vaughn walked up with a look of neutrality on her face as she sat down and had the hat lowered onto her head covering those bright blue eyes. Unlike those sorted before, the hat didn't call her house immediately as if it was seriously confused where to place her. After a few seconds the hat called out, "GRYFFINDOR!" Unlike the rest of her new house she wasn't smiling, she looked really confused. Luna was soon after sorted into Ravenclaw, and Ginny into Gryffindor as well. After a few announcements from the headmaster, including introducing professor Lockhart(which made Cub growl in a low voice), food appeared on the table and talk began.

"Cub?" Pyg asked,

"What?" Cub asked as he began filling his plate(as full as he ever filled him).

“Does being muggleborn make a difference?” She asked, filling her plate slowly.

“No, why?” Cub asked looking at her, he spoke without hesitation.

“I would have done equally well in Slytherin, but the hat thought I would be more readily accepted in Gryffindor being that I’m muggleborn.” She answered.

“Magically, being muggleborn has nothing to do with it, Hermione’s muggleborn and at the top of our class. Slytherins are generally pureblood maniacs, I can see how you would be more accepted here.” Cub smiled inwardly, he remembered that the sorting hat had briefly mentioned Slytherin during his sorting, but it had vetoed it like every other house.

Tempus Praeter

Gilderoy Lockhart was talking to the class on the first day of his class, which meant Cub was adding his own commentary in his head. Lockhart droned on, “-and five time winner of Witch Weekly’s Most-Charming-Smile Award, but I don’t talk about that-“ Obviously you do, because you just did. “-I didn’t get rid of the Bandon Banshee by smiling at her.” She probably took one look at you and died of laughter.

No one laughed, though a couple people snorted. Lockhart passed out tests to see how well the class had read his books before the year started, Cub took a glance at the test and knew he wouldn’t know any of the questions, he hadn’t read any of the books. Then he smiled, let’s mess with the git. Cub screwed up the questions on purpose just to see if he could get a rise out of the git of a teacher smiling at the front of the classroom, here is some of what he did.

1. What is Gilderoy Lockhart’s favorite color? Black, the color of evil.
2. What is Gilderoy Lockhart’s secret ambition? To be a punk rocker in America.

54. When is Gilderoy Lockhart's birthday, and what would his ideal gift be? January 10, 1904, a brain.

Lockhart collected the papers and noted some of the things people had done well, stopping at one with a look between confusion and anger before putting it angrily in the bottom of the stack before going on to praise Hermione. Cub was grinning inwardly, he knew he'd gotten to his teacher, though he was sure several things went without Lockhart understanding him. After all, very few people knew the birthday of the original scarecrow from The Wizard of Oz, Ferret had loved the movie and knew the most obscure facts about it.

While Cub was making fun of the teacher in his head, Lockhart had uncovered a cage with blue Cornish pixies, who in Cub's opinion were much smarter than Lockhart. Within mere seconds they had escaped and thrown the class into general mayhem, scaring the students, the teacher, and breaking many of the picture frames in the classroom. Lockhart hurriedly assigned him, Hermione and Ron to the task of capturing the pixies, the pixies were doing everything in their power not to be caught. Ron looked fairly upset about the whole thing, "Bloody idiot, pushing off his job onto us."

"He isn't that bad, Ron," Hermione said in his defense, though she, like many witches, seemed to think he was quite charming, "He was just trying to give us an exciting, the man is amazing, look at all the stuff he's done in his books."

"Hermione, I doubt that professor Lockhart could properly tie his shoes, much less stare down werewolves, vampires and whatever other creatures he claims to have beaten in his books." Cub said irritably.

"Aren't you even going to give him a chance?" Hermione asked.

"I gave him a chance, he pretty much assumed I was a kid caught up in my own fame. He only cares about fame, and therefore, he is stupid." Cub said with finality as he caught another pixie and threw it in the cage.

Alius Positus (For future reference, this means 'somewhere else', in Latin)

Ginny and Vaughn walked into potions to be met with laughing Slytherins, both girls and boys. The two Gryffindors ignored them, but that didn't stop one of the girls from saying, "Hey, look! It's the girl with a boy's name!"

Ginny noticed that Vaughn stiffened slightly, then thought for a moment before remembering Vaughn was traditionally a boy's name. Vaughn looked at them, "Just because Vaughn is usually a boy's name doesn't mean it has to be."

A few of the Slytherins scoffed, proving Vaughn's guess that gender interchangeable names were a concept unknown to pureblood wizards. As if to assure this one of the boys said, "Let me guess, you're parents are muggles."

"My parents are dead." Vaughn corrected, and Snape came in the room in time to stop further altercation. The glares from the other house were unmistakable, but to Ginny's surprise the girl paid no mind to them as if used to such questioning. It was obvious that Snape recognized her as a friend of Harry's because the teacher pestered her the whole time, but Vaughn dealt with it a lot better than Harry ever did. While Harry apparently became stone like and was silent, Vaughn answered questions with scary accuracy and an emotionless tone and the same stony look. It must be something they learned while being part of the pack, how else would it be exactly identical.

"Why did you answer to them that way when they asked about your parents?" Ginny asked after class.

"Why should I give them more of a reason to bug me, for all they know I'm a pureblood, I neither confirmed nor denied my blood status." She answered, "Never give your enemy ammunition."

"Let me guess, another life lesson from the Pack?"

“Of coarse, Sable to be more specific. He is incredibly paranoid, but we love him anyway.” Vaughn smiled.

Tempus Praeter

“Can I take your picture, Harry? Can I, can I? Please?” Collin Creevey had finally caught up with his idol and was almost literally annoying him to death. Cub rolled his eyes and he was about to tell Collin that he would allow his picture taken when hell freezes over when none other than the target of hundreds of blonde jokes in the past weeks walked up to the group.

Gelderoy Lockhart immediately began talking, “Harry, I must say it is a little early in your career for photos, you should really be more cautious. Now if we took the picture together it would seem less vain-“

“Let go of me!” Cub said jerking his arm from Gilderoy’s wandering hand, “I’m not taking any pictures, I’m not an egotistical jerk like you, I don’t care about fame. Just leave me alone!” Cub then stalked away leaving a very confused Defense teacher and a frightened first year in his wake, but Cub could care less. His anger had been building up ever since Lockhart had announced that they were going to begin reenacting his defeats of magical creatures with the help of volunteers. No one had missed Lockhart looking straight at Cub when he had mentioned a volunteer was needed.

(A/N: Okay, the next chapter will be the deathday party and dueling club, and for those of you who guessed, Vaughn is a seer. And I did research for the whole original scarecrow in Wizard of Oz, Cub says that to imply that Lockhart does not have a brain. I don’t like Lockhart unless I’m torturing him, it’s almost as fun as killing Quirrel, and having Sable threaten people’s lives, Oh, and Harry scaring people. And I can garuntee, Sable will be making death threats in a few chapters. Please Review!)

(A/N: There was some confusion with the Latin, Tempus Praeter after time/after and Alius Positus somewhere else)

(A/N: There was some confusion with the Latin, Tempus Praeter after time/after and Alius Positus somewhere else.)

“And so you agreed to go hang out with a bunch of ghosts during the Halloween feast?” Vaughn asked.

“Why not?” Cub shrugged.

“I thought you were against all adults.”

“Nearly Headless Nic is not an adult, he’s the imprint of a departed soul.”

“You don’t expect us to go with you, do you?” Ron said in a tone that plainly said he did not want to join Cub.

“No, I was planning on going alone.” Cub replied, causing Ron and Hermione to sigh in relief, but made Vaughn look rather worried.

“No.” Vaughn said defiantly.

“What do you mean no?” Cub asked her.

“I’m not letting you go alone, I’m coming with you.”

“Vaughn, what’s the big deal?” Ron asked.

“Bad things happen on Halloween, it was the day Cub’s parents died, three years ago it snowed so badly the Pack nearly died, two years ago there was a huge thunderstorm that struck the bridge three times in a two day period, and last year you guys were attacked by a troll. Not a lucky day in my opinion.” Vaughn snapped. She had already gained a reputation as being stubborn and a bit temperamental, “He isn’t going alone.”



“Fine,” The other three sighed exasperated.

Tempus Praeter

The deathday party had been boring, though both Pyg and Cub could honestly say that thanks to the smells of the rotting food they would not regret missing dinner, seeing as they had no appetite to speak of. They left the deep chamber in the dungeons both tired and ready for bed, but Cub stopped dead in his tracks. Pyg looked at him worriedly, “Cub, what’s wrong, you look like you’ve seen a ghost... well I know you’ve seen ghosts since we were-“

“Shh...” Cub said listening for something, “Someone’s talking about killing someone, wanting blood.”

Silence.

“I don’t hear anything.” Pyg told him.

“My hearing has always been better than yours.”

“My eyesight has always been better than yours.”

“I’m following it, it’s really far away, and up.”

“Wait up!” Pyg said running after Cub, who had taken off rather abruptly, “Why do I always get stuck with crazy people?”

Their two sets of footsteps ran up to the entrance hall and to the first floor, Cub slowing down every once in a while so he could hear the voice better. Pyg still couldn’t hear this voice, but was very superstitious about Halloween. As they reached the second floor Cub stopped so abruptly that Pyg ran into him, she was about to talk when she saw what had stopped him. On the wall written in what was unmistakably blood was the following words:

THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS HAS BEEN

OPENED. ENEMIES OF THE HEIR, BEWARE.

Hanging on a torch next to the words was something furry, soon recognized as the caretaker's mischievous cat, Ms. Norris. Pyg nudged her best friend's arm, "I don't know what will happen if we're found here, but I guarantee you it won't be pleasant. Let's get out of here."

"Bit late for that." Cub said shortly, he had put on his mask again. The mask he wore whenever he was in trouble to keep him safe, the one Sable had passed down to him. They had perfected it to an art, Pyg however, was not quite as good, but could cope. She too heard the large amount of people surging upstairs, she withdrew all of her emotion from her face and prepared to speak for them. The talk ceased as soon as they came into sight of Cub, Pyg, a dead looking Ms. Norris, the blood and inconsequently the water from Moaning Myrtle's latest tantrum.

Draco Malfoy called through the quiet that mudbloods would be next, but the next noise was the caretaker's tortured screams that turned into accusing yells when he turned on the two Gryffindors. Dumbledore, along with the ever present Snape, McGonagall and Lockhart, stopped Filch from going any further, McGonagall detached the cat from the wall and Lockhart offered up his office being it was the closest. The four professors, the caretaker, and the two students all crowded into the office. The teachers all began examining the cat as Filch glared at the students standing stiffly in the corner. Between Lockhart's musings and Filch's sobbing as he glared the minutes were becoming unbearable, thankfully Dumbledore cut him short.

"She's not dead, Argus." Filch looked at the headmaster in disbelief, "She's been petrified, but I have no idea how it could have happened."

"What do you mean? They did it, they were found there!" Filch spit, pointing at them.

"No second year, or first year could have done this, petrifying is difficult magic." Albus said calmly.

“But-“ Argus began again.

“I have never touched your cat, neither has Vaughn.” Cub cut him off with a very curt statement.

“We just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.” Pyg said in the same tone, neither of their gazes moved from the wall.

“That doesn’t explain why neither of you were at the Feast, which puts you two in a rather suspicious position.” Snape snarled. That man drove Pyg insane, she personally thought he deserved to be kicked in the face, but kicking teachers in the face was generally frowned upon.

“We were invited to Sir Nicholas De Mimsy-Porpington’s deathday party and decided to attend, any of the ghosts there could tell you we were there.” Cub said, it was several seconds before they realized he was talking about Nearly Headless Nick.

“Why not join the feast afterwards then?” Snape asked.

“We were tired and wanted to go to bed.” Pyg answered, then cursed the truth for sounding like an excuse.

“Without eating?”

“Frankly, after seeing the food at the deathday party we entirely lost our appetites.” Both her and Cub apparently thought that being led up here at a run because of a creepy voice only Cub ever heard was a bad thing to mentioned.

“Well, Severus, I hardly see anything that points any blame towards Mr. Potter and Ms. Hawthorn.” McGonagall said sharply before Snape could continue his interrogation. Both he and Filch launched into argument.

“Quiet, Severus, innocent until proven guilty. Argus, Pomona has mandrakes, and when they mature a potion can be made out of them

that reverses petrification, that Severus will make.” Albus added when he saw Lockhart look as if he was going to volunteer for the task, “You two may go.”

Cub and Pyg left as stiffly as they had come in and when they were safely out of earshot on the fourth floor Cub sighed, “I hope it was right not to tell them about the voice.”

“Since I didn’t hear it they might have thought you were insane,” Pyg agreed, “And I don’t know about wizards, but any sane muggle would lock you up in an asylum.”

“Next question, should we tell our respective guardians about the voice?”

“Sable would have no idea what to do, but not tell anyone. Remus would freak and tell Dumbledore.”

“You know anything about that chamber? ‘Cause I don’t.”

“In Hogwarts: A History it mentions a rumor of Salazar Slytherin building a secret chamber in the school and hiding a monster only his heirs could control in it, however that is unlikely.”

“You sound like Hermione.”

“She’s forcing her knowledge on me, it’s a bit frightening.”

“I actually feel bad for Ms. Norris, that’s a horrible fate.”

“A fate many more are destined to meet, and a pair will meet one much worse.”

Cub looked at her, “What!”

“I didn’t say anything.” Pyg said defensively.

“You most certainly did.”

“Did not!”

“Did too!”

“Did not!”

“Did too!”

“Did not!”

“Did too!”

And on their argument went until they reached the common room.

Tempus Praeter

A lot of suspicion rose about the two in the next few weeks, Harry and Vaughn were thought of to be the heir of Slytherin, Harry was known to be from a pureblood line and no one but her close friends knew Vaughn's. They were bothered by all sorts of people to the point Harry suggested Vaughn tell them she was a muggleborn so she didn't have to deal with it, Vaughn recited the reasons she gave Ginny and Harry was forced to concede. Suspicion grew after Collin Creevey was petrified after having annoyed Vaughn and Harry by asking for a picture of the heirs.

Hermione and Ron had jumped to the conclusion it was Draco Malfoy, thankfully the Slytherins trusted Vaughn enough as a pureblood that she was able to ask Malfoy about it face to face. He said that the last time the chamber was opened fifty years before when no Malfoys were at Hogwarts, therefore taking him out of suspicion. Vaughn was smug for a while afterward because she had said this from the beginning. They had all settled on trying to figure out what the monster was, but were clueless. Vaughn was getting too distracted with all of this and began studying with Ginny a lot, partly to help cheer her up, after all, she and Collin had sat next to each other in most of their classes.

All of the Weasley's had stayed for Winter Break, Harry and Hermione had decided to stay as well and Vaughn, much to Sable and Lulu's chagrin, had decided to stay in the end. Before Christmas Break an announcement appeared stating that the following night there would be the first meeting of a dueling club, which appealed to Harry and Vaughn's competitive spirit and Ron and Hermione thought it would be helpful, besides they all needed an escape from their heavy load of homework.

They all had to suppress a groan when they found out it was being taught by their two least favorite teachers, Snape and Lockhart. Darn them. When they were watching a demonstration by the two of them they were all secretly hoping they would instantaneously kill each other, no such luck. They were split up, Ron with Seamus, Hermione with Milicent, Harry with Draco, and Vaughn with Pansy Parkinson. Of course Harry and Draco's duel went immediately South, not that other groups were doing much better. Then it was decided that they use Draco and Harry as an example group, Snape got Draco ready, which made Harry nervous, and Lockhart attempted to help Harry who had been particularly ever since Harry broke his arm during Quidditch and the idiot removed the bones in his arm.

As soon as the duel began Draco shouted a spell Harry had never heard of, courtesy of the potions teacher, and a large black snake erupted from the end of the wand. Lockhart attempted to help, but failed miserably, only enraging the snake, which decided to attack Justin Finch-Fletchly. Cub did the only thing he could think of, he shouted, "No!" The snake turned to him, it's head tilted to the side, "He didn't do anything wrong, don't hurt him."

The snake pretty much nodded and curled up for a nap, but was vanished by Snape before anything could be said. He then noticed everyone was staring at him, he caught Justin's expression, one of total fear, before he fled. Most of the people looked frightened, Snape's eyes were narrowed, not in anger, but suspicion. Vaughn finally tugged him from the room with Ron and Hermione in their wake. They headed up to their dorm silently until Ron finally got out.

"You're a Parselmouth."

“I’m a what?” Cub asked.

“You speak Parseltongue, the language of snakes.” This seemed to upset Ron.

“Is there anything wrong with that?”

“Yes,” Ron sighed shaking his head slightly, “It’s the language of Salazar Slytherin, his trademark.”

“Which will make everyone think you are making the attacks happen, because you would have to be the heir.” Hermione finished.

“Great!” Cub sighed exasperated,

“That’s why I couldn’t hear it!” Vaughn seemed very happy about her revelation.

“What are you talking about?” Cub asked.

“Halloween, I couldn’t hear a voice, then Ms. Norris was attacked. Perhaps the Slytherin monster is a snake of some sort.” Pyg explained.

“A snake that petrify people? Like what, mythology’s Medusa?” Hermione scoffed.

“Hey, if magic id real, why can’t a snake that can petrify people be?” Pyg said, the nest day Justin was petrified, and seven weeks later Hermione and Cho Chang were, the entire school was scared. Especially since every attack had been on muggleborns, Vaughn was now frightened, and when she was afraid it was because of a legitimate reason.

(A/N: Next chapter, a very angry Sable, the chamber of secrets and we dispose of a certain annoying Defense professor. I might be posting a bit more often seeing that I’m on Spring Break, but don’t

thing that will nullify my 5 review rule, not that I see that as being a problem. Please review!)



Only a couple weeks after Hermione had been petrified they had found her note, Ron and Harry that is, the rest of the school wa

Only a couple weeks after Hermione had been petrified they had found her note, Ron and Harry that is, the rest of the school was smart enough to stay in their dorms. The basilisk fit everything, and only partially looking at the creatures like through a reflection or lens petrified instead of killed. As they were trying to figure everything out about where the chamber was Madam Pomfrey came in.

“Go to your dorms now,” She said in a strict voice reminiscent of McGonagall’s, “There’s been another attack.”

“On who?” Harry asked, uneasy with her tone of voice.

She bit her lower lip, “We aren’t sure yet.”

Harry and Ron, completely unsettled ran to the common room where their head of house accounted for their presence, then ran to get Harry’s invisibility cloak they could find out what was going on. It was never good when the staff didn’t even know what was going on. They followed McGonagall as she left the tower and headed down to the staff room where the other teachers were waiting. Most were unhappy about the situation, Snape showing it most as McGonagall, as Headmistress since Dumbledore was taken away, was making a firecall.

“I don’t see why we have to go to this level of security without even knowing what exactly is going on.” The potions master protested.

McGonagall ended the firecall and turned on the potions master, “There has been more added to the message about the Chamber, it says ‘Their skeletons will lie in the chamber forever.’ Are there any students missing from your houses?” The other three heads shook their heads, “Good, then it’s just the two from my house, their guardians have been informed and will be arriving shortly.”

The entire staff room went quiet, Flitwick finally said, "Gilderoy, weren't you saying the other day you knew where the Chamber was?"

Lockhart paled a bit, however only the two hidden students seemed to notice, "Wel-well, o-of coarse I do, I am Gilderoy Lockhart."

"It's settled then, you will go into the chamber to try and save them." McGonagall said just as the flames behind her turned green, and two adults appeared behind her revealing two red-haired adults, Mr. and Mrs. Weasley. McGonagall asked them to wait for the two others, and after a couple minutes the fire raged green again and two more people stepped out- Remus and Sable.

"What's going on? All I was told was that something went wrong here." Sable said as soon as he took stock of his position, and as upset as Sable looked no one wanted to mess with him.

"Mr. Hawthorn, Mr. and Mrs. Weasley, the monster has taken two students into the chamber, where the monster should kill them by all logic." McGonagall said softly, "The only students we can't find are Ginny and Vaughn."

The Weasleys burst into tears, including Ron though Harry was muffling the noises, Remus was in a state of shock, and Sable looked ready to rip apart whoever had allowed this to happen. Sable gritted the teeth, "And where exactly is this monster?"

"The Chamber of Secrets, only our Defense teacher knows where said chamber is, and he will go there as soon as possible to try to save the girls." McGonagall answered.

Without hesitation Sable had grabbed Lockhart by the cuff of his shirt and pulled him to his feet, "If you've known where this Chamber is I have no idea how you got off not going down and killing that bloody monster, but I assure you, if my daughter, or her friend Ginny come to any harm, you WILL pay. Understand?"

Lockhart nodded weakly before Sable dropped him still frowning, glaring at him as if to say go. With a flourish of his cloak he disappeared, unknowingly followed by a couple of second year students. When Ron got some control he asked why they were following Lockhart, Harry's answer was simple, "He promised to get a member of my Pack and your sister back safely, I intend to make sure he succeeds."

Harry seemed very displeased to watch Lockhart disappear into his office and quickly threw the cloak off of them and tucking it away before throwing the man's door open. Lockhart was in the perfect 'deer in the headlights position', he had frozen in the middle of tossing clothes into his trunk and donning a traveling cloak. Harry's eyes flashed in anger and made a barely audible growl, "What do you think you're doing?"

"Umm... I just realized that I have to be at the place... with the stuff... where they..." Lockhart said weakly making bad hand motions to try to convey what he was saying.

"You're full of crap, you were running away and we all know it." Harry said venomously, in very much the same tone Sable had used on the man only minutes before, "Do you even know where the Chamber of Secrets is?"

"Of course not!" Lockhart said, "No one knows where the Chamber is, and until now, no one ever knew there was a chamber. I'm getting out of here before something worse happens." Lockhart moved to head at the door, his now packed suitcase in hand, but Harry had his wand out and was standing in front of the door.

"I'm afraid we can't let you leave." Harry said calmly, although his anger was evident.

"I'm not sure that you noticed," Ron continued from behind the Defense teacher, his wand pulled out as well, "But my sister and his best friend, who we both care for deeply, are down in that chamber. You promised to go get them, now while you don't know where the Chamber is, we do."

In the next couple of minutes Gilderoy Lockhart tried to escape, failed, and was now being forced to lead the way to the girl's bathroom at the end of the hall with both Harry and Ron aiming their wands at him. Lockhart was now admittedly nervous, seeing as he knew what happened when the previous Defense teacher got on Mr. Potter's bad side, a side where he seemed rather firmly stuck. He held out hope that he may find a way out of this situation.

"Myrtle!" Harry called, and then they watched the ghost approach, "Do you recall how you died?"

Lockhart spaced out when Myrtle was retelling her death, ran to the bathroom because she was upset, heard someone when she was crying, opened the door to a pair of eyes and died. Harry then asked where the eyes were, she pointed to one of the sinks, after a brief thank you, Harry went to examine the indicated sink. Lockhart was now confused, "What does this have to do with finding the chamber?"

Although he couldn't see Harry's face he was positive he was rolling his eyes in the same manner that Ron(who still had his wand pointed Lockhart) was, "The Monster is a basilisk, one look in the eyes and it will kill the seer, they were only paralyzed because they saw reflections of they eyes, not the eyes themselves. It's been traveling through pipes in the school. And this is the entrance." Harry then made a very similar sound the one he made during dueling club.

The sinks opened apart to reveal a pit like hole with no visible bottom, and they could only see the first ten feet because it was so dark. Lockhart knew one thing, he did not want to see the bottom of this hole, "Okay, we found it, now we can go."

"Nice try," Harry said with a look on his face that startled Lockhart, "But you're going to go down first. Don't tell me that the all powerful Gilderoy Lockhart, defeater of banshees, vampires, werewolves, ghouls-"

"I didn't do any of that!" Lockhart interrupted, but didn't see looks of shock on either of the boys' faces.

“We could have told you that from reading any one page of any of your books if someone had prior experience.” Ron said.

“Trolls are immune to stunners, so you couldn’t have stunned it.” Harry finished, “In you go.”

Harry and Ron were now standing with wands drawn between him and any exit, so he inched forward to the hole and just stared down into it, mentally preparing to jump to an unknown. After a long minute he felt pressure on the back on his knees and the ne was falling down the dreaded hole.

Ron looked at his friend questioningly, “Was it really necessary to do that?”

Harry gave a malicious grin, “You have no idea how long I’ve wanted to push him into a pit.” Harry then disappeared into the pit followed closely by Ron.

Tempus Praeter

TOM MARVOLO RIDDLE

I AM LORD VOLDEMORT

The words shone in the air, angering Cub. Not only had Voldemort opened the chamber the last time and blamed it on Hagrid, but he was now using the life force of two of his friends to get a body to separate him from that darned diary. Apparently Ginny had found the diary in her bag and seeing that it was empty began writing with it, quickly ‘befriending’ the soul that had written back to her. When Pyg had gotten stressed, Ginny had shown her, he had then possessed the two girls in order to use his pet to reek havoc on the school.

“So you just rearranged the letters in your name because you didn’t like it?” Cub said in disapproval, “That would be like me telling everyone to call me Master Jharne Protts.”

Tom thought for a moment as if trying to make sure it had all the letters, "Essentially, yes."

"And there's nothing I can do to stop you."

"Nope but since you took my future life from me, I will now destroy you. Come, my pet!" Tom said, ending in Parseltongue.

Cub heard scales coming through the pipes below, and strangely the sound of wings from above them. The wings arrived first, Dumbledore's phoenix dropped the sorting hat into his hands and landed on his shoulder as the basilisk entered the large chamber. Tom was laughing, "That old fool Dumbledore sent that for his precious champion?"

Cub made a face, "What am I supposed to do with the hat, pull a rabbit out of it?" Cub, in good fun pretended to pull a rabbit from the hat, but instead a metal hilt with a ruby came shortly followed by a sword. Cub looked at it for a minute in admiration, "Well, this is a lot more helpful than some bloody rabbit."

Shortly after getting the sword Fawks had successfully rendered the power of the basilisk's eyes useless, although the giant snake continued to try and kill Cub. At one point the basilisk nearly bit Cub, but Cub used an improvised shield to save his life, Tom Riddle's diary to be exact. It was fairly surprising when the book was bit and Riddle began screaming, it caught the basilisk off guard for long enough for Cub to stab it, and kill it. By this time blood was flowing freely from the diary, Tom was gone and two very emotional girls had woken up and were more than on the verge of tears.

"Sorry Harry, we-" Ginny and Pyg began saying simultaneously, cut off only by Cub motioning them to stop (which was actually quite violent looking seeing as Cub was still holding the sword).

"People much greater and with far more experience have fallen for his charms," Cub said.

“But Harry, we petrified those people, we wrote on the walls, we did it all!” Ginny insisted.

“We would black out for hours and wake up without remembering how we got back to our dorms.” Pyg added, truly frightened at the very idea of it all.

“You were being possessed, you weren’t actually doing anything, no one died, everyone will be better tonight with the mandrake potion, it will all be alright.” Harry assured them then went into thought, “Pyg, was it the Phoenix or the Anka that was the bird that could carry any amount of weight like it was nothing?”

“Ankas are just huge, Phoenixs make their load weightless, why- oh, Fawks!” Pyg said remembering their research earlier that year on supposedly mythological creatures thinking that one of them might be the beast of Slytherin.

“Fawkes should be able to carry the five of us up to the castle,” Cub said, then noticed the other two didn’t know about the fourth and fifth in their party, “Ron’s babysitting a loopy professor.”

Tempus Praeter

“I know you are worried about your daughter Mr. Hawthorn, but it’s out of our hands right now.” McGonagall said to Sable for the tenth time this hour, musing that she had actually found someone more irritable than the snarky potions master glowering in the corner.

“I don’t trust that so called teacher of yours.” Sable reminded them.

“So you have told us, repeatedly.” Snape growled, Dumbledore sighed, having only been at the school after being removed for about twenty minutes he was far too annoyed by the crowd.

The doorknob turned, which caught the attention of everyone, because it could only be Lockhart with his news. Instead the two missing girls walked through the door without a scratch on them, but had a fair share of blood spatter, and were immediately seized by

their respective guardians into hugs. Lockhart came next supported by Ron and a surprisingly covered in blood Harry. Lockhart had blood on him that everyone hoped was just because Harry was holding him.

“Mr. Potter, is Professor Lockhart-“ Dumbledore began.

“Dead? I wish.” Harry said, the room gave a visible sigh, “However we did have to stun him, he got kind of loopy after he was simultaneously hit with my expelliarmus, Ron’s stunner and his own obliviate.”

“Two questions,” McGonagall said, “Why was Lockhart using an obliviate charm, and how did he hit himself with it?”

“He hasn’t really done anything in his books, but he obliviates the people who did and takes credit for it. As for how he hit himself, it was really and unfortunate place for that piece of mirror to be.” Harry answered.

“I know,” Ron said, “Reflected off and hit him right between the eyes. I had to stun him because he was trying to sign his autograph on the wall with a banana. I’m still not sure where he got the banana.”

“Then how did Harry get covered in blood?” Remus asked.

“I killed a basilisk with a sword, it’s a bit bloodier than you’d think.” Harry said motioning to the sword, “And I pulled this out of the sorting hat.”

“Who opened the chamber this time?” Dumbledore said, confirming it had been opened before.

“Same person as last time, only this time he was using this to control Ginny and Vaughn,” Harry said pulling a bloody book out from his robes.

“Who opened it last time?” Sable asked.



“Voldemort.” Harry said, then rolled his eyes as half the room flinched (Lockhart even flinched, and he wasn’t even conscious, wuss). “I don’t see why you are all afraid of the name of a guy who’s dead.”

“He’s not dead, remember last year.” Dumbledore reminded him.

“Fine,” Harry said sharper than would generally be normal, “bodyless.”

“But in twelve month’s time, his most loyal will return, an in twice that time, he shall return to his glory.” Vaughn said, and Harry caught a mist in her eyes.

“That was a very interesting thing to say.” Harry commented.

“I didn’t say anything.”

“You made a prediction, I think you’re a Seer.” Harry said.

“What?” The girl demanded.

“You’ve made at least three predictions, that two people would have a worse fate than those petrified, that Gilderoy was going to piss me off, and that we’d be better off staying home. So far they’ve all come true. You also don’t remember saying any of them.” Harry said matter of factly.

“Fine, I’m a bloody Seer,” Vaughn said and muttered, “Bloody Hogwarts and it’s bloody magic and being able to tell the bloody future.”

-

(A/N: Thus ends year two, next is the Summer, cue Padfoot! Padfoot is my favorite character, although I like writing Sable better. I apologize, Sable was supposed to be much more threatening. Like always, please review!)

Review this Story/Chapter

(A/N: Warning, Monty Python allusions ahead)

(A/N: Warning, Monty Python allusions ahead.)

“Hey Cub, isn’t it a bit early?” Sable said as he answered the door, noting that it wasn’t even seven-thirty.

“Perhaps a bit, but Remus has been driving me insane. He has been a bit overprotective lately and won’t say why, he’s talking to the headmaster right now.” Cub answered sitting on the couch.

“And?” Sable said sitting in an armchair across from him with a look on his face indicating he knew Cub wasn’t telling the whole truth.

“And there’s this dog following me when I’m alone, though it is very possible I might be hallucinating.” Cub mused. “It’s probably a stupid feral, has rabies, and want to kill me.”

Sable looked thoughtfully, “Sounds like your defense teachers.”

“Lockhart didn’t want to kill him.” Pyg said walking in the room, “He just wanted to wipe his memory for a majority of second year, oh, and try to get him to reenact his supposed victories against all sorts arm creatures.”

“Thankfully he stopped when I nearly hexed him.” Cub said in a dreary tone.

“Maybe this will cheer you up, we got it last night.” Sable said handing him a letter in very familiar handwriting, Ferret’s.

Dear Sable, Lulu, Pyg and any other members of the Pack present,

It’s Ferret, and I’ve got great news, I’m leaving the states and coming back to England. I should be arriving on about June thirtieth. I apologize for my shortness, but we can talk plenty when I get there.

Yours sincerely,

## Ferret

“The Pack is almost back together,” Cub said grinning, missing his savior from four years ago. “And she should be here tomorrow.”

“We know, now you two be good, I have to get to work.” He said ruffling both Cub and Pyg’s hair on the way out. The two twelve year olds spent the rest of the day at the park trying to avoid the big black dog, that showed itself with Pyg as well.

## Alius Positus

“I understand that there is danger of attacks on Harry since a high security dark wizard has escaped, but why is Harry a specific target?” Remus asked Dumbledore.

Dumbledore sighed, “It’s because of who it is, it’s Sirius.”

Remus leaned back in his chair exasperated, why now? He remembered his childhood friend, they had always jokingly said he was going to end up in Azkaban, but they had never suspected the betrayal of his best friend, “And you suspect that Sirius will try to finish killing the Potters.”

“We do feel that is possible, as does the ministry, they are insisting that the castle be guarded with dementors.” There was a strange bitterness in Dumbledore’s voice that suggested he was not overly fond of the idea.

“How’s that going to help? Black’s already gotten past dementors, what will stop him from doing that again?” Remus said, knowing the only way Sirius would be caught is if he got cocky at the fact that he had escaped once already.

“I unfortunately do not have a choice in the matter, although there is another pending matter I would like to discuss.” The headmaster shifted into a more comfortable position, “As I’m sure you have noticed we are in the need of another Defense teacher.”

Remus flinched, he hadn't been able to eradicate the vision of Harry covered in blood frowning as he held the unconscious and loopy Defense teacher. It had been discovered Lockhart was a fake (big surprise there) and had tried to run instead of finding the two girls. Remus nodded.

"I would like to offer the position to you." Albus finished.

Remus jerked his head up, "Surely you jest."

"Of course not Remus. You were top of your class in Defense, you kept several of your classmates from failing when you were a student here," Here Dumbledore's eyes twinkled in the way they did when he was recalling a certain group of four Gryffindor troublemakers, "I see no reason not to ask you."

"Don't tell me you've forgotten my 'furry little problem'. The board of governors for the school would have your head for the very idea and have Harry taken away from his pack." Remus said harshly.

"With wolfsbane potion and the Shrieking shack you should be fine." Dumbledore said in that omniscient tone that left nowhere for argument.

"Fine, but I have one other question." Remus relented, "What about the form for Hogsmeade? Harry's bound to ask soon."

Dumbledore frowned, "Hogsmeade is far too open and easy to sneak into, even when it's surrounded by dementors. I do not think it's safe for him to be put in that situation."

"I figured as much."

Tempus Praeter

Ferret was met by all four remaining members of the pack at ten o'clock the next morning at the Pack's apartment, and she hadn't changed much, she still had her hair as short as most boys kept theirs, she wore a blue shirt that was a bit too big and a pair of faded

jeans. Then there was the actual greeting, which took several minutes because she had to hug everyone and exclaim how everyone had grown or changed, doting on Cub in particular because ever since she saved him he had been her baby, "Cub, you've grown so much, and you aren't so scrawny anymore. Just what kind of Cub are you anyway? I think you're a wolf cub, perhaps a change to Wolf is in order."

Sable snorted, "Oh, I think him being a wolf cub is more than appropriate."

Ferret's gaze sprang back to Sable, "Sable, I know that tone, that is not a good tone, what's wrong?"

"We're not allowed to tell anyone, and I assume you can keep a secret within the pack?" Sable said knowing that Ferret would nod before he even said it, "Magic is real, Cub's a wizard and Pyg is a witch and a Seer."

Ferret stared blankly at them for a second, "And?"

"Wait, you aren't bothered by magic?" Lulu asked.

"Do you remember me telling you anything about my childhood?" Ferret said as she sat on the kitchen counter(which nearly made Lulu freak, she was obsessed with neatness now that she was off the street).

"No, you never said a thing." Lulu admitted.

"Well, this is my life in a nutshell. I was born in a small village north of London as Bridget Marie Prewett, daughter of Melanie and Gideon Prewett. My mum was a French witch and my father was a wizard from the area, and I am a squib. When I was four my father was killed in a fight against this wizard baddie, my mother and me went into hiding for two years before my mum committed suicide, just couldn't live without my father. I was left alone and ran into London where I met up with two other runaways and started the Pack." Ferret rattled out, "And before you ask, all I remember of the other wizards I saw

around there was my aunt and uncle, both vibrantly redheaded like my father, I lived with my mothers family in America, dull old geezers if you ask me.”

“Then perhaps you won’t freak with knowing that Harry’s guardian, lives on Lyndon, is a werewolf.” Sable said.

“You live with a WHAT!” Ferret roared.

“That wizard baddie you were talking about is Voldemort, a.k.a. Tom Riddle. He killed my parents when I was one, tried to kill me too, but I inexplicably repelled the spell and kind of killed him. My father had three friends when he went to school, his friend Sirius Black betrayed him to Voldemort and killed his other friend, Peter. The only one of the alive is Remus, a werewolf who takes a potion to stay tame and my guardian.” Cub explained.

“Well, I figure after living there for two Summers and you’re still alive he must be safe,” Ferret sighed, “I hated America, although it may have just been my Granny, she despises me being a squib. It’s great to be in the Greatest country in the world again!”

Sable, Pyg and Cub smiled mischievously, “Finland! Finland! Finland!”

“NO!” Ferret yelled rolling her eyes, “I meant England you pathetic excuses for Brits.”

Tempus Praeter

“Remus?” Harry asked a couple nights later at dinner.

“Yeah?” Remus replied quickly, utterly shocked that Harry had actually started a conversation.

“Did you ever know a wizard named Gideon Prewett?” The question was posed quite casually, but Remus just stared at Harry for a moment.

“Yes, he and his brother Fabian and sister Molly, now Ron’s mum, were all in the Order of the Phoenix, it was a group rebelling against Voldemort. Gideon and Fabian died during the war. How did you know about him?”

Harry thought for a minute before saying, “I met an old friend again the other day, Gideon and his wife Melanie’s daughter, a squib who has been living as a muggle.”

“I do remember Gideon having a daughter, it was something starting with a b, Brook or something.”

“Bridget.”

“Yes, that does ring a bell.”

“Well, we call her Ferret.”

Remus nearly lost control of his fork in shock, “You’re kidding.”

“I don’t lie.” Harry said before they both left a few minutes of silence, “Remus, I was wondering if you could sign a form for me to go to Hogsmeade.”

Remus sighed, he had known for the last three days this conversation wouldn’t go well, but it was unavoidable, “Harry, both me and the headmaster think it’s safer if you don’t go to Hogsmeade.”

Harry gave him a calculating look, “Is there a reason for this, or is it just because I tend to get in trouble no matter what I do?” It was said in a flat tone, but Remus could sense the bitterness behind it.

“There is a reason, a prisoner from Azkaban has escaped.” Remus said, unsure exactly how to tell the boy his parents’ killer was loose and was probably looking to kill him.

“By the look on your face it’s one of Voldemort’s followers.” Harry commented, “Which one?”



“It’s Sirius.”

Harry successfully lost control of his fork, it clanged loudly against the nearly empty plate(which didn’t much since he never filled his plate more than halfway anyway). Harry clenched his teeth, “That traitor is going to try to kill me, isn’t he?”

“We believe he is.” Remus replied, a little thrown off that his reaction was anger, not being afraid, “We also don’t want you to go after him.”

Harry glared at him, “Do I look stupid? Contrary to popular belief I don’t go looking for trouble, I do what’s better for everyone, which usually ends up with some homicidal creature, since I really don’t consider anything with Voldemort human, trying to kill me and barely escape alive. At least I know what’s after me, my dad’s supposed best friend and killer of his friend Peter and about twelve muggles.” Remus really wanted to argue with that, but he had to admit he had a point.

“Hgwarts is taking some extra security measures, the ministry is insisting we have dementors, they guard Azkaban, to surround the school.” Remus said.

“Yeah, that will help. What we need is a halfway decent Defense teacher, Lockhart was to vain and Quirrell stuttered so badly we only understood half of what he said.” Harry said angrily.

“What would you do if I said that I was going to be the Defense teacher next year?” Remus said, curious to see Harry’s reaction.

Harry looked at him with this faraway look, “I reserve my judgment on that until I actually see you teach, though I can at least say I won’t have to worry about my Defense teacher trying to kill me or cause bodily harm.” Harry gave a rare smile.

Alius Positus

He watched them in their small first floor apartment as they gave various reactions to their conversation. Which included the near

dropping of silverware and the actual dropping thereof. After the conversation Harry washed his dishes dutifully, Remus looked as if he was trying to stop him, but Harry shook his head and brushed off Remus' attempts. Remus sulked in his chair, Harry brushed his shoulder and said something, Remus returned with something and Harry went to his room. Was this how Harry said goodnight? Usually children hugged their parents, or in this case their guardians. This is the way it had been for several nights.

He had escaped over a week ago, he knew Remus would probably be living in London, but he hadn't expected Harry to be living with him. He watched Harry from a distance, and stayed out of sight when the boy was with Remus, Remus had made it clear he thought Sirius was guilty. It was obvious Harry didn't know his animagus form, which made it a whole lot easier to spy on him as he went to spend time with this mysterious group of people. Anything to see Harry, his godson.

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(A/N: The Monty Python reference is in Spamalot, but I'm not positive if it's the Holy Grail, it's the bit about Finland, although they might find Stalker... Like always, reviews are always welcome. The part about it being possible Cub is hallucinating is that he is having nightmares where his scar hurts. Tell me what you think about Ferret, the idea came to me at about ten forty-five last night.)

The Weasleys were quite surprised about seeing four people meeting them at Diagon Alley instead of three, but they didn't falter

The Weasleys were quite surprised about seeing four people meeting them at Diagon Alley instead of three, but they didn't falter. Harry was looking quite happy and eagerly introduced the new girl, "This is an old friend of mine, Bridget Prewett."

That's when Mrs. Weasley blanched, "Prewett?"

"Yes, Prewett." Ferret replied demurely, even though a couple hours before she had been fussing over her appearance until she finally just said screw it and made herself look like, well, herself again. "I believe you knew my father."

"He was only my brother for almost twenty-eight years, but we all assumed you died when Melanie did." Mrs. Weasley said in a tone that few had ever heard Mrs. Weasley talk in, one of mourning and shock.

"I ran away, not wanting to go to be sent to my grandparents since they hated me. It was almost ten years later that I met Cu- er, Harry." She said, "Everyone thought I was dead for eleven years, it was better than the last two years I spent with my maternal grandparents."

"Oh, poor baby," Mrs. Weasley said giving Ferret a hug, which startled her at first but she relaxed after realizing that she had agreed to this when she said she wanted to meet her aunt and cousins, "I remember Mrs. Melamare, hating old prejudice witch, and you haven't been to Hogwarts, so you must be a squib, she must have treated you awful."

"I can't deny that," Ferret said, "But it's okay, I have years of good memories with my friends that can overshadow whatever hate she pushed on me."

"So she's our cousin?" Fred or George asked, though half the people there would have sworn it was Fred, the rest had given up all hope of telling them apart.

“Yes.” Mrs. Weasley nodded.

“Awesome! Another girl in the family.” Ginny said.

“You think you’re happy, my family just more than doubled.” Ferret said smiling.

Ron leaned over to Harry, “Is it just me, or is she overly optimistic?”

“Yeah, you get used to it after a while.” Ron still looked doubtful, “Hey, if Sable, king of anger, got used to her optimism enough to ask her out, you can deal with having her as a cousin.”

“They’re going out?” Ron asked.

“No,” Vaughn said rolling her eyes, “They are ‘getting reacquainted with one another over a candle lit dinner’.”

“Sounds like a date to me.” Ron snorted.

“That’s what I said, Ferret let’s us call it a date, but if you want to see Sable get angry and turn red enough to rival a fire truck, call it a date.” Harry suggested.

Tempus Praeter

“Sorry to be blunt Wolf, but you look like you were just dragged through a tornado tied to a brick and holding a cat.” Ferret said two days after Cub’s thirteenth birthday during which he had been given the name Wolf.

“That was a... well, bloody colorful description.” Wolf said tiredly, “I’m fine.”

“You liar.” Sable growled playfully.

“Curses, foiled again by my apparent lack of the ability to bloody lie.” Wolf grumbled.

“What’s wrong, you look as if you haven’t slept in a week.” Vaughn said.

“I’ve slept in a week, just not much because I’m having stupid bloody nightmares.” Wolf said attempting to rub the sleep out of his eyes.

“You haven’t had nightmares since about your ninth birthday.” Ferret said concerned.

“I know, I know,” Wolf said, “My headaches from first year have come back once a week, it’s nothing that time won’t help, it’s stupid bloody Voldemort.”

“That’s the fourth time you’ve said bloody this morning, are you sure you’re okay?” Vaughn asked, unless Wolf was really angry he generally didn’t repeatedly say the word bloody.

“I’m bloody fine.” Wolf said grinning, purposely trying to tick off his best friend.

“You better be glad we can’t use magic, otherwise I would hex you right now.”

“Wolf, stop saying bloody, Pyg, stop threatening Wolf.” Sable said in an authoritative voice, “Wolf, is that dog still following you?”

“Yes, the blo-“ Wolf stopped when Ferret gave him a fairly intense glare, “The dog is still following me. It’s quite creepy actually.”

Tempus Praeter

It was getting dark, he should be coming out anytime now, although he never went anywhere alone anymore. That tall man or short haired girl would walk him everywhere, although that pretty much meant

from Remus' apartment to theirs. What was peculiar is while he was listening in to one of Harry and Remus' conversation Remus mentioned he had put in his two week's notice and his co-workers were surprised he would do that after working there for twelve years. He was still appalled by Remus and Harry's apparent lack of compassion, two and a half months and other than lightly brushing each other's shoulder they had not touched. Sirius wanted so badly to just walk up and hug the boy, but he would be thrown in jail, or given the Kiss, before he could so much as say 'lemon drop'.

Finally, he thought as Harry walked out of the building holding hands with a girl looking a tad bit younger than him, following them was a couple about ten years older than them consisting of the older boy and short haired girl. He had seen the younger girl before, but he had to admit she had this whimsical air about her, always smiling with her blue eyes shining. In this instance she was skipping and Harry was, oh god, James would roll in his grave if he knew about this, Harry was skipping as well with one of his wider smiles. Sirius had soon discovered this was a rare occurrence.

"Wolf! Pyg! Don't go too far ahead." The older girl shouted causing the younger couple to stop. Obviously the older couple was in charge, but neither of the elder were old enough to be the parents of the other girl. And the girl, Pyg, was the only one with a magical signature other than Harry, and Harry was called Wolf in this group. It was quite peculiar.

"Aww, why?" The young girl whined, she was still far from being mature.

"You know perfectly well what the danger is, the world knows there's an escaped convict on the loose, and Wolf has to be especially careful." The mad scolded, but not harshly. Sirius knew immediately they were talking about him. Darn suspicious circumstances that kept him from his godson.

"It's fine Sable, the only thing out here I fear is that dog, and I don't see it." Harry replied, Sirius felt confused, Remus hadn't mentioned his animagus form, perhaps he was trying not to think about it himself.

After all, Remus didn't know of his innocence. The only one who did was Peter, Harry's friend's 'pet rat', more like pet murderer and traitor.

Tempus Praeter

"Harry." Hermione said as they were boarding the train, "Don't you think it's kind of strange that Mr. Lupin decided to take the train with us?"

Harry shrugged, Remus had already found them a compartment and was waiting while they sorted out their luggage and said their good byes, "He's really nervous about Black being free, he was friends with him as a kid, he knows that Black is really determined when he wants something."

"And he wants you to kick the bucket." Ron added in dismally.

"At least it isn't one of my teachers." Harry said as he finally found the compartment with Remus, only him, Hermione, Ron and Vaughn were sharing the compartment, Ginny and Luna were with a couple other Ravenclaws.

"He isn't trying to kill you, but Snape definitely has it in for you." Ron said as they settled in the compartment, Remus tried to ignore their conversation by reading the load of crap in the Daily Prophet.

"He has it in for all Gryffindors, he just doesn't like us." Harry argued.

"Which is why he takes ten to fifteen points from our class on a daily basis and not the other classes, right?"

"Fine, it's partly me, partly Neville botching up his potions, which I admit I do a good potion of as well." Harry admitted.

"Potions isn't that hard." Vaughn said nonchalantly.

"Yeah, because you aced his class last year." Ron pouted and mumbled something resembling show off.

They then moved into more comfortable positions, Hermione leaning against the doorway reading some obscenely long book, Ron making sure his pet ret was carefully concealed from Hermione's new cat Crookshanks, Remus had fallen into a peaceful sleep by the window(to which Pyg had suggested drawing a mustache on his face with a marker), and Harry and Vaughn were playing Mary mack sitting cross legged sideways on the seat. After over an hour of this Vaughn stopped abruptly, "It got chilly rather quick there."

It took a couple seconds for everyone else to register the temperature change, that was actually awake that is. Slowly it grew colder and colder until the glass in the window and Harry's glasses not only fogged up, but ice formed on them, Harry then discarded his glasses finding them useless. Hermione looked panicked, "Should we wake him up?"

"I don't know, maybe-" Harry began, but the door to their compartment was being opened by ugly hands and pushed open to reveal a cloaked character. Harry's chest froze and he was feeling actual pain even though the figure did nothing and everything just kind of went black...

Tempus Praeter

"Harry, Harry..." He heard someone call, although he wasn't sure who it was at that point, he opened his eyes but the fuzzy blurs surrounding him told him nothing. It was after a moment that everything came back to him. The... whatever it was... came in and then he felt as if he only had his bad memories, mainly the bad ones from the worse days at the Dursleys. The despair had actually made his chest hurt a bit, but it wasn't anything too bad, except for the fact that he had rather ungracefully fainted.

"Glasses?" He asked when he finally remembered what happened.

He heard Pyg giggle, "Yeah, he's okay." A minute later someone slid his glasses on and Pyg and Ron helped him to sit upright on the seat. It was warm and there was no remains of the creatures.



He was about to ask when Remus cut him off, "Eat this and I'll explain." He held out a piece of chocolate.

Wolf's exact line of thought: Wow, my head hurts. What the hell is going on? Hey, look! Chocolate! I like chocolate. Wait a minute, is Remus giving me chocolate? Remus doesn't share chocolate... Hey, look, Chocolate!

Needless to say, Wolf accepted the chocolate and began eating it slowly as his head began clearing from the fuzziness fainting had induced. Remus then began talking, "That was a couple of dementors checking the train for Black, they are meant to suck the happiness from people, which is why they're the guards of Azkaban, they drive most insane. Apparently your bad memories are especially bad and they caused you to pass out."

"Did anyone else pass out?" Wolf asked, and was immediately let down by the looks of pity on his friends' faces.

"No," Remus said in a tone made it seem he was unhappy about departing the news, "It's extremely rare for someone to pass out from the effects of a dementor."

"Right." Wolf said looking far off complaining in his head about having to be Harry bloody Potter, the-boy-who-faints. Pyg wormed herself to his side and rested her arm on his shoulder in a reassuring manner, Remus wanted to help Harry and did so in the only way he knew how without scaring him.

"Here," He said holding out another piece of chocolate, "Eat it, it will help."

Wolf took it, and ate it at a mournfully slow pace. Remus felt pity for him, the look on Harry's face was contemplative, but there was no hope on that face, no joy. He was recalling days before he had happiness, the memories brought up by the vile dementors. Harry didn't deserve to have memories that could make him pass out if his happy memories were taken away. Remus couldn't help but agree with Harry about sharing what happened, it was far too much of a weakness to share.

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(A/N: Sorry if the next couple of chapters are a bit slow and lacking in Sirius-ness, but I need to get there. I'm day dreaming of times in the far future such as fifth year when I get to torture Umbridge, meanwhile I would like you to tell me how I'm doing so far. Review, por favor.)

“Harry, you seem upset.” Hermione said, she along with Ron, Vaughn and occasionally Ginny had been sitting in on him while he was in the hospital wing... again.

“Hmm, I wonder why?” Wolf replied, his voice dripping with sarcasm, “I have a fractured leg, a sprained wrist, lucky it’s not worse mind you, and my broom was turned into wood chips by a homicidal tree.”

“You’re almost better, Madam Pomfrey said you can leave tonight right before dinner.” Hermione said trying to cheer him up.

“And then me and Pyg are going to the library.”

“Why?”

“There has to be a way to fight the dementors, I can’t faint again in front of everyone, and-“

“Harry, relax. Dumbledore won’t let them get close again.”

“He wasn’t going to let them near school grounds in the first place, and you saw how well that worked out.” Wolf sighed remembering how the dementors had crowded on the field and he had fainted, no one was able to stop his fall, but managed to cushion his fall enough so he didn’t die. Hermione recognized the same helpless look on her friend’s face as he had had a month ago when Gryffindor tower was attacked, both he and Ron had needed minor medical attention. Ron had a small nick on his forearm from the dagger and Harry had a very distressed Crookshanks attached to his face. The entire school had spent the rest of the night in the Great Hall, none of the teachers seemed to figure out that Harry had been frightened more than Ron because he knew that Black didn’t care who got hurt in the process of killing Harry Potter.

Harry had this faraway look on his face and Hermione gave up on any form of conversation and waited the forty-five minutes until he was free to go to dinner with him. He was silent throughout dinner and when the meal was over he and his impish little friend navigated

through the crowd so quickly it was impossible to keep track of them. Ron sighed, "Those two are crazy."

"Yes, but they're cute together." Hermione mused.

"Please tell me it's in the sibling cute way." Ginny said looking at the last spot Harry was seen.

"Sorry Gin, they're perfect for each other. I've rarely seen them together when they aren't smiling." Hermione said realizing that Ginny had a crush on Harry.

Ginny sighed, "I was afraid of that."

Tempus Praeter

Defense before lunch on Mondays almost always guaranteed something interesting happening, today it was a grindylow attacking a Hufflepuff, then Neville tried to help failed miserably, and Harry was finally able to conquer the pest. Remus had been told that Harry was awesome when it came to defense, but he had never expected just how much of an underestimation that was. Neville and a few Hufflepuffs on the other hand... let's just say Remus took as many precautions as possible. Earlier in the year he had intended to not let Harry face the boggart fearing it would be Voldemort or his relatives, but Harry had slipped by and the boggart took the shape of a dementor.

"Come on Harry, it's time for lunch." Ron urged, like he always did when it came to food.

"Go ahead, I'll catch up with you." Harry said, he hadn't fully recovered from the match, his voice was oddly quiet, but would have much quieter if his wrist hadn't broken the fall on his neck. He had been unusually quiet lately, then again, Harry was always quiet. "Remus?"

"Yeah?" Replied as he checked to make sure the lid wouldn't come off the tank again and turned to face Harry.

“Could you teach me to produce a patronus charm?” Harry asked, it wasn’t overly hopeful and was in a tone that made him seem indifferent.

“How do you know about patronus charms?” Remus asked, he didn’t recall ever mentioning that particular spell.

“There’s thing magical thing on the third floor called a library.” Harry said mildly.

“ Right, and you were probably dragged there by the best researchers outside Ravenclaw.”

“Actually, I dragged Pyg there, Hermione wasn’t up to going.”

“Okay,” Remus said, “So why do you want to learn the patronus charm.”

Harry looked a bit unsettled as he thought of a decent answer, “I don’t like being at the mercy of these creatures, it nearly got me killed last time. Next time it could cost me my soul.”

“The dementors won’t come onto school premises.” Remus said, although he wasn’t planning on resisting much longer.

“That’s what everyone said before the match two weeks ago.” Harry reminded him, Remus nodded knowing that Harry would bring up something like that was impossible to argue.

“I’ll teach you the patronus charm, but I need to find a way to do so without an actual dementor.” Remus agreed.

“Boggarts.” Harry said shortly, after a short moment Remus realized that the room had gone cold when Harry’s boggart took the shape of a dementor. If boggarts could recreate the effects of dementors they could be repelled by the same thing dementors were, and could be gotten rid of by closing a box.

Remus smiled, "Give me two weeks to find one, I'll tell you when the first lesson will be shortly after."

Tempus Praeter

"Wolf, it wasn't actually dementors." Vaughn said laughing after the match, "It was a couple of Slytherins trying to trick them. Dumbledore was so mad at them."

"They shouldn't have tried to pull that, especially since there was two witches and two wizards that had corporal patronuses, along with many members of the staff as I understand it." Wolf replied, he had taught Hermione, Ron and Vaughn how to produce patronuses. Ron's was a dog, Hermione's an otter, Harry's was a stag, and Vaughn's was a wolf.

"I'm just curious, what memory are you using?" Vaughn asked him.

"It's more of a dream of my parents, I can also produce a wolf if I think about Saturdays, but it isn't nearly as strong as the stag." Wolf replied, "And yours?"

"Finding you again." She said softly with a light blush on her face, before preparing to ask Ron and Hermione who immediately refused to share, both blushing madly.

"Just curious, does Professor Lupin know that we know the patronus charm?" Ron asked.

Wolf snorted, "No."

"Why not?"

"He never asked."

Tempus Praeter

“If you’d kept it, you could at least have flown around the pitch while we’re at Hogsmeade.” Ron whined, still bitter about the Firebolt incident. Shortly before the last match Wolf had been sent a Firebolt, but as soon as he realized it had no name he was uneasy and refused to so much as ride it until it had been checked for curses.

“I can fly around the pitch on a school broom.” Wolf replied with an easy grace.

“I still don’t get why you insisted to accompany us to the gates if you can’t go.” Hermione said like the entire idea was crazy.

“I have nothing better to do.” Wolf shrugged.

“Oh, that’s right, we all finished our homework last night. What are you going to do?” Hermione asked.

“Let’s see, I’m going to mope, curse Remus for not signing my form, mope, curse Black for escaping, mope, scare first years by cursing them in parseltongue as I aimlessly walk around the school, mope, and if I find time to I might write a letter to Sable, Ferret and Lulu, did I mention moping?” Wolf droned as his friends couldn’t help but giggle(Ron would later deny that he had ever giggled, it was a manly chuckle instead).

Remus was at the gate, no doubt to make sure that Harry didn’t sneak past Filch, which would have been nigh impossible in the snow, he would leave tracks even under his invisibility cloak. Wolf waved good bye to his friends and after watching them for a moment as they talked happily, he turned and began wading back to the castle. That’s when the twins walked up to him and whisked him off to some small barely used corridor in the castle to give him the Marauder’s map. After receiving it he pretty much outright dared Remus to stop him from going to Hogsmeade through the various passageways.

Tempus Praeter

“Yes Professor?” Harry said in an indifferent tone as he entered the Potion Master’s office, which had not only Snape, but Remus with a curious look on his face and a very wet Draco Malfoy.

“Mr. Malfoy and a couple of his friends were assaulted with snow at Hogsmeade today, would you know anything about this.” Snape growled.

Harry struggled to keep a straight face as he answered, “Yes, you see, when it snows muggle kids, perhaps magical kids, get entertainment by throwing balls of snow at each other-“

“Mr. Potter! I am sure no one is throwing ten pound balls of snow as recreation.” Snape snapped, “Did you assault Mr. Malfoy?”

“No, in fact I spent the day at the owlry moping because I couldn’t go to Hogsmeade.” Harry responded, leaving out that it was only for about twenty minutes after leaving Hogsmeade to give himself an alibi. Technically, not lying.

“Can anyone attest to this?”

“The Weasley twins saw me heading out that way, other than that, the owls.” Harry answered, he had gone in the direction of the owlry after talking to the twins.

Snape was angry, no that’s an understatement, he looked murderous, “Fine, you can go.”

Harry withheld the numerous comments he could make as he walked out of the office only to be caught moments later by Remus. Remus sighed, “Off the record, did you attack Malfoy?”

“So no matter what I say, you won’t get me in trouble?” Harry asked, Remus shook his head, “Truthfully, although I very much would have enjoyed to attack Malfoy with snow, I didn’t do anything.”

Remus looked confused, “Same deal, but with whether you were in Hogsmeade.”



“Come on, wouldn’t have everyone saw me if I was in Hogsmeade?” Harry asked.

“True, just don’t do anything stupid.” Remus said smiling, Harry certainly did have more restraint than his father.

“I never do anything stupid.” Harry said and was gone before Remus could argue that point.

Tempus Praeter

Wolf sat on the arm of the chair Pyg was sitting on, she looked up from her book, “So when’s your detention?”

“I escaped detention by telling half truths.” Wolf told her, “But next time, be more careful. I nearly burst out laughing like a mad man.”

“I’m sorry, couldn’t resist, Malfoy was being such a prat...”

“Did I say I was sorry you did it? That was so worth it for the look on Malfoy’s face.”

-

(A/N: Someone reviewed that I’m spoiling you all by updating so often, but I’m sure you guys aren’t complaining. Besides, I need the stress relief because I think my new penpal in Mexico is a total creep. If you want Stalker to come back, he will be back this upcoming Summer, and you’ll find just where he was. Next chapter will take me awhile, it will be INTENSE! Anyway, as a challenge you can put quotes in reviews that I will try to incorporate in later chapters. Lemonbomber out, yo!)

Vaughn sighed, "Two months to go and we will have made it the entire year without someone being majorly hurt."

"Some would probably say that I had a bit more than minor issues because of that quidditch match, but I see what you mean." Wolf said. It was a pleasant Saturday afternoon in early May, the four of them were playing a friendly game of 'catch the rock, or else' as it was in certain cases. It wasn't a heavy rock, and they were careful enough to avoid injury.

Ron threw the rock to Vaughn as a grey and an orange blur raced towards, the former scurrying up Ron's leg into his pocket, the latter had claws halfway up his leg scratching ferociously to get to Scabbers. Ron tried in vain to kick the offending cat off of his leg, "Crookshanks! Get off my bloody leg."

"Ah, but it's your other leg you should worry about." Vaughn said.

"Pyg?" Wolf said tentatively.

"What? I didn't say anything." Vaughn argued.

"Ron! Watch the catless leg!" Wolf yelled, as of yet none of Pyg's predictions had gone astray, in fact, she was the reason they had decided against divination. Besides, Remus and several others claimed Trelawny was a phony.

As soon as Wolf spoke, the large black dog that had followed him for ten months ran out and grabbed Ron's leg in his mouth and dragged him to the whomping willow, screaming the whole way. The willow even stilled for a few moments to admit the dog and its load into a small passageway at its roots.

"How come we never noticed that passage before?" Hermione asked, though her worry was evident.

"Two words." Wolf replied with clenched teeth, "Homicidal tree."

“It stopped when Crookshanks put her paws on that knot in the tree.” Vaughn said experimentally, “Think you could hit it, if it works, we can follow him.”

Wolf nodded and scooped up the dropped rock and they rushed towards the tree until they were within throwing distance. Thankfully Wolf had awesome aim, he was able to hit the knot, though by no means was it head on, but it was enough to stop the tree. They scurried into the passage beneath the tree before it moved again. Wolf sighed, “I probably could have used magic to do that.”

The girls nodded and pulled out their wands, Hermione lit hers since both Harry and Vaughn had better reflexes when it came to defensive spells. They went quickly and cautiously down the passageway, Wolf ready to cast a spell at any moment. They emerged into a room of a shabby house where Ron was sitting on a bed, his leg bleeding profusely. Hermione reached him first, followed closely by the others, “Are you okay?” Hermione asked.

“Behind you.” Ron gasped out, Wolf turned, but was disarmed before he could say a spell.

The man who disarmed Wolf was tall, lanky, and a bit thin. His black hair was scruffy and unkempt, he had a looming presence, which was rather intimidating considering he had a wand pointing at the four of them that he had cornered. The other three were pretty sure they knew who it was from bad pictures in the Prophet, but Wolf knew those eyes from pictures Remus had showed him. It was Sirius Black.

Vaughn saw that Wolf was shaking, however slightly it was since Black’s spell had knocked him back while Vaughn was behind him. She nonchalantly maneuvered her wand into his back pocket knowing he could put it to more use than she ever could when she was under pressure. Before the silence grew awkward she spoke out, “What happened to the dog?”

The man laughed before gently setting Harry and Ron’s wands that he had taken on a nearby table before he changed into aforementioned dog, then changed back, “That’s what happened to

the dog, now back to what I came here for.” She had never seen Wolf so frightened, she was pretty sure he was rigid enough to be pushed over and be in the same position like cartoons.

He picked the wands up, pointing Ron’s wand at them again, “-“ Black didn’t have the chance to speak before the door flew open revealing Remus pointing his wand at Sirius.

“Padfoot.” Remus said with a bit of indifference making it hard to tell just how angry he was.

“Moony.” Black said cautiously, “And what brings you here.”

“It’s the full moon.” Remus answered, “That and I guess I’m going to have to stop you from killing my students.”

“I wasn’t planning on killing students, just a certain rat.” Sirius replied with odd inflection on the word rat.

“Surely you don’t mean...”

“Yes Moony, he’s here.” Sirius said as the door burst open revealing a fuming potions master, before either adult could move Snape was lying stupefied on the floor. Both of them followed the direction of the light that stunned Snape until they were looking at Wolf holding a wand pointed to where Snape’s chest would have been had he been still standing.

Vaughn spoke up, “Mind telling us what the bloody hell is going on?”

Sirius looked at Harry’s wand in his hand and Wolf motioned that it was Vaughn’s he was using. Hermione had her wand out, but didn’t look like she was going to use it. Remus looked at Sirius, “I believe I would like to know as well, mind you, it’s half an hour to sunset.”

Sirius sighed, “Fourteen years ago Lily and James were told they needed to go into hiding because You-Know-Who was after Harry, they decided to use the Fidelius Charm to keep themselves safe. They knew I was expected to be Secret Keeper, so they made it

Peter to avoid suspicion, unfortunately Peter betrayed them. I never did. I went to get revenge on him that night, but he got away and has been living as a pet rat in the Weasley family since. I came to finish the job."

Wolf had lowered his wand, but was still was glaring at Sirius. He handed Vaughn's wand back and whispered something to Ron. The red head reluctantly retrieved the rat from his pocket and handed it to Wolf, who sighed as he stood holding the panicking rat firmly. He seemed to grow a mask over his features as he took a few short strides to the two men, Sirius tried to take Scabbers, but Wolf pulled the rat back, "Give me my wand, and you can prove this is Peter."

Sirius was thrown off by the angry voice. He looked at his old friend, who said, "Seems fair enough."

Sirius handed the thirteen year his wand, and it was only then that Wolf permitted Sirius to take the rat that scratched him as Sirius took him, Wolf didn't so much as flinch. Sirius pointed his wand at the rat and muttered a spell, the rat instantly began growing and becoming more human, though never returned to looking exclusively human, he was a very rat-ish person. He immediately started begging his two old friends for his life, a goal in which every attempt was in vain.

That's when he turned to Wolf, grabbing the hem of his robes, which everyone in the room except Sirius could have told him was as stupid as tickling a dragon's nose. Right off the bat nothing seemed wrong, Wolf just looked a bit unnerved as Peter claimed that his father wouldn't want Peter to be killed by Sirius and Remus. Wolf's shock then turned to anger, he then reacted in the only way he knew how, he kneed Peter in the face and stunned him for good measure. Sirius looked pleased with him, "Nice job Harry," Sirius said putting his hand on his shoulder gently only to have it yanked from him angrily.

Sirius and Wolf locked eyes for a long moment, in those green eyes there was a mixture of disgust, hurt and anger. Wolf turned away and began tending to his friend, he cast a muttered charm and the cuts scabbed over, not really healed but Ron could now walk.

Remus held Sirius' shoulder, "There's a lot you need to know, but I have about ten minutes before I transform. Pretty much, Harry doesn't like or trust adults, he barely trusts me and we've lived together for three years. It all started with his relatives, just give him space."

Snape was beginning to come to, he saw Sirius, Peter and then Remus, he focused on the last of the three, "Dumbledore sent me to tell you that one of the students figured you out and has alerted the Board of Governors. Seeing as you are in no position to, I will escort the students, the felon and... Black back to the castle."

The group of seven was about half way across the lawn when the air grew frigid, Snape did something unusual for a teacher, he swore in front of students, however, it was entirely appropriate. He was levitating Peter, Black was helping the Weasley, which left Potter and the two girls to defend them from what seemed to be every dementor in a hundred mile radius. Soon they were surrounded, the girls fumbled with their wands, Granger actually dropped her wand. Potter's Patronus was circling them in vain attempt to keep them all safe, but there was simply too many and the Patronus was fading...

Tempus Praeter

It was bright, unusually bright, since he didn't much care for too much light, which is why he preferred to reside in the dungeons. He heard someone saying his name and forced his eyes open, only to see Dumbledore, "What happened?"

The Headmaster sighed, "As you were bringing everyone up to the castle we lost control over all the dementors, only Harry, Hermione and young Vaughn were able to cast the patronus and were overwhelmed by the sure numbers and stress of the situation, thankfully we were able to rescue everyone before someone lost a soul."

"Anything else I should know?"

“Harry nearly exhausted himself with keeping his patronus up, Ron and everyone else is well, Black has been cleared, Peter has unfortunately escaped once again, and Remus resigned the minute he arrived at the castle this morning.” Dumbledore said softly, “Although to lighten the situation Ms. Hawthorn made the most delicious fudge this morning.”

“What a pity.” Snape said, “Remus was the first Defense teacher in years that wasn’t a complete dolt.”

“One other thing, I nearly forgot.” Dumbledore’s expression grew dark, “Our resident Seer has given another prophecy, longer than all her others. Vaughn didn’t remember a thing afterwards.”

Snape froze, that Hawthorn girl never made a good prophecy, they all ended badly, “Dare I ask what it’s about?” Dumbledore handed him a sheet of paper.

We will all come together, then slowly fall apart,

Two shall be happy,

Two shall be secluded,

Two shall be in war,

The wheels of fate firmly in place,

One innocent is soon to die,

Another in a year,

And it will be just the beginning.

“Quite dismal for the ray of sunshine that girl usually is.” Snape commented dryly.

“And we can’t be sure what it’s about, though we can guess part of it has to do with Voldemort, and Remus thinks the first part is about

their Pack, but he isn't telling them. According to it, we can't change a thing."

-

(A/N: Well, I was expecting that to take a lot longer to write. Next chapter, Wolf wakes up, meets Sirius fully, and Harry frightens Sirius and they make plans for the Summer. No world cup for Harry though. As I said before, I'm more than willing to put random lines you give me in here, my friend gave me one that I will use in the next chapter. Please Review!)



Wolf awoke to find himself alone in the hospital wing, one of the few places in Hogwarts he simply despised

Wolf awoke to find himself alone in the hospital wing, one of the few places in Hogwarts he simply despised. Without any of his friends there to stop him from leaving, he did what he always did, snuck out. Having fairly good memories of the night before, he wanted to know what had happened after he had passed out in vain attempt to save them. He had learned over the years that it was best to trust his instinct, said instinct led him down the hall to Remus' office. Remus was sure to explain what was going on.

Wolf was about to knock on the door to his guardian's office when he heard voices from inside. It was Remus and Sirius Black, Wolf had no interest in interrupting their conversation, but rather liked the idea of listening in on them. It was Sirius he heard talking first, "I never knew you to be all that sarcastic Moony."

"My soul was removed and I replaced it with sarcasm." Remus replied in an expressionless tone. Wolf froze, had Remus had his soul sucked out by dementors even if he was a werewolf? Perhaps since they knew Remus was a werewolf they had the dementors administer the Kiss as punishment or something. Or-

"Wolf, don't worry, everyone's fine." Vaughn said from behind him, apparently she had caught him listening in, "Everyone's soul is intact and has not been sucked out of them. Fudge?" She held out a small piece of fudge.

"Where did you get the fudge?" Wolf asked.

"I made it because I got bored this morning, the kitchens are amazing and the house elves are awesome, though I shocked them by asking if I could cook." Vaughn smiled, she loved cooking, and that's what helped her in potions, "So, does Madam Pomfrey know you're out and terrorizing the world?"

"If she does she most likely isn't too happy about it." Wolf replied.

“She wanted us to thank you for what you did with Ron’s leg, it probably would have gotten infected if you hadn’t used that spell on it.” Vaughn said, “Now, I have to go, the ministry wants me and Hermy to describe exactly what happened last night.”

“She hates being called Hermy.” Wolf reminded her.

Vaughn grinned, “That’s the precise reason I continue to call her Hermy.” It was then that Vaughn left, with her and Hermione gone, he had seen Ron was still in the infirmary, the only place he had to go was in his guardian’s office. In all truth, he did not like meeting new adults, and no matter how innocent Sirius was, he had still spent twelve years in jail, who knew what he had become now. Wolf was very weary of his father’s best friend. He wondered if he’d ever tell them that he had the Marauder’s Map and his faather’s invisibility cloak, not for a while most likely, Remus was still his teacher and that would put him under suspicion.

Alius Positus

“Yes, I’m sure the Ministry will be more than willing to knowingly endanger children.” Remus said in reply to Sirius saying there was no reason why Remus couldn’t continue teaching.

“I never knew you to be all that sarcastic Moony.” Sirius replied.

“My soul was removed and I replaced it with sarcasm.” Remus shot back, “Anyway, I thought we went over this, we even made plans for the Summer.”

“I know, but all of Harry’s friends and older students thought you were the teacher they learned the most from.”

“If I had a choice, I would stay as teacher in a heartbeat, but alas, I don’t.” Remus said as he continued packing. They heard quiet voices beyond the door that faded before there was a knock. Knowing it was probably one of the girls or Harry, Remus called, “Come in.”

The door opened slowly, and what little emotion was on Harry's face before seemed to disappear from his features. The boy slipped inside and closed the door with no sound, moving instantly to the far side of the office from Sirius. Remus had gotten the distinct feeling that Harry would revert back to this now that Sirius was here. Fortunately he had learned a few things from living with Harry for almost four years, like by his eyes lingering on the suitcase Remus was packing was asking why he was. Although Remus knew the question would never be asked, he answered, "Before the board of governors had a tizzy I decided to resign,"

Harry's expression faltered for half a second implying he was not at all happy about this. Remus sighed, "Peter also escaped, as soon as the ministry got rid of the dementors he transformed and that was the last anyone saw of him. Vaughn also had another rather dismal prediction about six being together and splitting off into twos to happiness, seclusion or war, also about innocent people dying." Both Harry and Remus could guess one of the people going off to war and assume the other if the six were the Pack.

"This Summer we're moving into Sirius' old home, Grimauld place, though he says no one has lived there since the war. Me and him are going to get the place livable while you spend the first two weeks living in with the Pack, Sable and I have already arranged it. After that the three of us will live at Grimauld place." Remus informed Harry.

"I don't see why you're talking." Sirius drawled in a complaining tone, "He's not listening to a word you say."

Remus looked up from what he was doing, sure enough Harry was at the far side of the room staring out the window as if faking a daydreaming state. Remus smiled, "He hears much more than anyone give him credit for, and has impeccable memory of everything he hears."

"Is he always like this?"

“No, I think it’s just you because I haven’t seen him act like this since we first met.” Remus said, apologizing silently for talking as if Harry wasn’t five feet away and hearing every word they said.

“Should I feel insulted that he’s classifying me with every other adult when just this morning you told me I was acting like a five year old?” Sirius asked.

“First of all, you were acting like a five year old, secondly, you still have the appearance of an adult, thirdly, for the last nine or ten months everyone has been pounding it in his head that you’re a traitorous murderer that wanted to kill him. I say that’s a perfectly good reason to be weary.”

“Why would I want to kill my godson?”

“Everyone, including myself, had been convinced you killed Lily and James, it’s not a far jump in logic. Is it Harry?” Remus asked.

For a second the thirteen year old didn’t move, than slowly shook his head.

“He’s often much more talkative, but he’s going to be very cautious around you for a while. I’ve been forgetting to tell you, he was originally placed with Lily’s sister’s family-“

“I met her sister at their wedding, the woman hated all things having to do with magic, I believe I charmed paper cranes to chase her at the rehearsal dinner.” Sirius interrupted.

“And Lily was about to kill you for that.” Remus mused shortly on the subject, “For a reason that no adult seems to know, he ran away to London when he was nine-“

“Eight.” Harry said, he was still looking out the window leaning against the wall. Remus asked if he was sure, Harry just nodded.

“Okay, he ran away when he was eight and ran into a group of five kids that were running away from being in an orphanage, Pyg, also known as Vaughn and Harry’s best friend, her older sister Lulu, her adoptive father Nigel who I have reason to believe has killed someone during his life and is quite intimidating, the girl he’s dating, Bridget, Gideon’s squib daughter, and a boy named Stalker that was adopted and could be just about anywhere. None of them are all too fond of authority, and Harry and Nigel seem to have grudges against the world.”

“Let me guess, they call themselves the Happy Sunshine Group of Happiness.” Sirius said sarcastically.

“Not exactly, they call themselves the Pack, in fact his nickname in the group is Wolf.” Remus answered.

“Fitting, the adoptive son of a werewolf is called Wolf,” Sirius said before frowning, “When did he leave?”

Remus looked at Harry, or where Harry had been minutes before, “I guess he slipped out while we were talking without us noticing.”

Alius Positus

“...officially hate everyone having anything to do with the Ministry, who were they to bring the press to interview us, much less that... that... woman!” Vaughn said as she and Hermione walked into the Gryffindor Common room.

“Can I assume that you didn’t like that reporter?” Wolf asked from in front of the fire.

“I think she is a reincarnation of the devil named Rita Skeeter, but never you mind that, how did your talk with your guardians go, since Sirius Black is your godfather he is technically your guardian.” Vaughn inquired with interest.

“Let’s just say I didn’t do much talking, they didn’t even know I left.” Wolf replied sighing deeply.

“How much do you consider not much talking?” Hermione asked.

Wolf thought a brief moment, “I shook my head twice and said one word, and I think most everyone would agree that isn’t much talking. Sirius felt quite insulted by the whole thing. Did you guys know Remus is resigning?”

The girls nodded, “He announced it at about seven this morning when half the school was asleep because it’s Sunday.” Vaughn answered.

“We’re moving into Sirius’ old house, Grimauld place, but I’m spending two weeks with the Pack before going.” Wolf added.

“Well, I didn’t know that, and Sable knows I hate surprises, the entire Pack does really, except perhaps Lulu and Stalker-“

“In whatever country he may be currently residing in.” Wolf interrupted, Vaughn really couldn’t care less that he had, they both interrupted each other and weren’t bothered by it because it was their nature.

“Actually, come to think of it, Lulu and Stalker were always different. More academic based, pretty much the only reason we ever really learned anything. If they hadn’t hated orphanages so much they would never have been caught dead living on the street the way we did.” Vaughn said.

“Perhaps because they were destined for something far different from the rest of us.” Wolf agreed, “Were you told about your latest prophecy, two for war, two for seclusion, two for happiness. Which one is different?”

“Seclusion and war are tragedies, so Stalker and Lulu are bound to be happy when all is said and done, you and me are probably heading towards war of some kind, which means Sable and Ferret will be secluded.” Vaughn ticked off on her fingers.

“I don’t know about anyone else, but in the end I would like everyone to be happy.” Wolf said, both the girls nodded in agreement.

Alius Positus

She stared at the bed with the sheets tossed back, a certain black-haired, green-eyed student of hers was supposed to be in that bed. Once again the boy had gotten the better of her, “Darn you, Potter.”

-

(A/N: Challenge phrase used in this chapter: “My soul was removed and I replaced it with sarcasm.” set by GeniusGirl. This is an example of the phrases I would like, though I will not guarantee that all submissions will be accepted, though those that are will see their phrase in a chapter and be mentioned in my end author notes. The next chapter will be primarily if not entirely Wolf’s time with the pack. And, what’s this? We find out where on the bloody planet Stalker has been hiding. Please Review!)

Sirius and Remus had left Hogwarts three weeks before the end of term, which means for a week the entire school had no Defense classes and then took exams and had a free week at the end of the year. A week Wolf, Hermione, Ron and Vaughn had no idea what to do during, usually there was a major emergency or one of them was in the Hospital wing, this year there was nothing... Not even a Defense teacher to make fun of, although many Slytherins were having issues with Remus being a werewolf, which had nearly caused a fist fight between Wolf and Draco Malfoy. After Malfoy's continued taunting Vaughn deeply regretted not letting Wolf beat some sense into the stupid pureblood Slytherin.

However, at the moment, the four tightly knit friends were getting off the trains at King's Cross. Wolf and Vaughn said good bye to Ron and Hermione, whose parents had met them on the platform, then they proceeded on to get back to the muggle King's Cross where they would meet Sable, Lulu and Ferret, who were very concerned it wouldn't let all of them through the barrier. Sure enough, the three of them were sitting on a bench about twenty meters from the barrier(okay, the girls were sitting, Sable was leaning on the back of the bench). They greeted each other happily and then moved towards the exit.

Wolf got a strange look on his face, "If Remus didn't drive you here, how did you guys get here?"

Lulu looked very proud as she took something out of her pocket and showed them, "I got a driver's license a couple months ago, shortly after Mrs. Thompson's death. I attended a college prep school a ways away, far enough I needed to drive."

"That reminds me," Sable said softly, "We have a surprise for you."

"What is it?" Vaughn asked excitedly.

Sable gave a wicked grin, "I'll give you a clue, it's five foot nine, weighs about one hundred and seventy pounds, is eighteen years old and vaguely resembles a lobster, it's-"



“Me!” A voice said moving in between Vaughn and Wolf, it was Stalker. He still had the same tawny brown hair, though it was a touch lighter, same dark brown eyes. What had really changed was his cheeks were now fuller, just like the rest of the Pack, and his skin had a very distinct redness to it. Vaughn and Wolf immediately hugged him.

“Where have you been? You look like you’ve been a tad closer to the equator.” Vaughn teased.

“Vivé en Santiago, y está muy cerca del ecuador.” Stalker said quickly with a thick Spanish accent.

Wolf blinked a few times, “What?”

“Darn it, must have been speaking Spanish again,” Stalker said frustrated with himself, “I meant to say that I have been living in Santiago, the capital of Chile, and it’s very close to the equator.”

“So you’ve learned Spanish?” Vaughn asked, looking slightly frightened.

Stalker shrugged, “Didn’t have much of a choice, when in Rome-“

“I thought you said you were in Chile.”

“I did, but it’s a saying meaning that if everyone you’re around is a certain way, what’s the point of resisting?”

“For your pride.” Vaughn said as they arrived at the Pack’s car... or should I say mini van. Vaughn looked at it disapprovingly, but climbed in the very back, followed by wolf, Sable and Ferret sat in the middle, and Stalker too the front seat next to Lulu. Vaughn whispered to Wolf, “Then again, what pride, he’s riding in a mini van when he’s younger than thirty.”

“Vaughn, what houses do you think the rest of the pack would be in?” Wolf said.

“Sable would without question be a Slytherin, Ferret would either be in that house or Gryffindor, Lulu would be in Ravenclaw, and I guess Stalker’s too nice to be anywhere but Hufflepuff.”

“And what is the correlation between pride and Hufflepuffs?”

“There is none, because Hufflepuffs have no pride.” Both of them began laughing hard enough for Sable to ask them if they were on crack, which they absolutely weren’t(Say no to drugs!).

Tempus Praeter

“Okay, we’ll tell you what we’ve been doing, then you tell us what was going on with you.” Ferret said, “I spent three years with my stupid prejudiced grandparents who were insulting me, constantly.”

“Me, Lulu and Vaughn have been living here, after a year we met up with Wolf and they both go to the same school for witches and wizards.” Sable added, completing several of their stories at once.

“I was adopted by one of my father’s best friends, a werewolf, I found out my parents were killed by the most evil wizard of our time, I reduced him to a weak spirit thingy when I was one, he came back my first year at school, posed as one of my teachers and tried to kill me, I killed a giant snake thing second year and this year found out the true cause for my parents death, and someone who was trying to kill me is actually my godfather who was trying to kill my friend Ron’s pet Rat.” Wolf said, not realizing how impressive of a list it was.

“Well, that sounds, quite frightening.” Stalker said, “I was adopted by this old couple in Santiago, Juan and Sara Lopez. They taught me Spanish and I went to a Chilean high school and graduated top of my class. I also became quite good at catching pigs in the mud, it’s almost a sport down there with severe consequences. No pig, no dinner.”

“Wait, they owned the pigs they ate?” Lulu asked.

“Yeah,” Stalker nodded, “You learn quickly not to name anything on the farm, because then it would ruin eating the meat, you’d starve yourself, and eventually die.”

It was quiet for a minute, then Ferret spoke, “So where do we head from here?”

Lulu and Stalker looked at each other, “I’ve been accepted at a college in Maine, in America. My tuition’s even been payed for.”

“And I was hoping to accompany her, I have pretty good credentials to get a job.” Stalker said, the way they talk indicated they had been planning this all morning since he arrived at the train station two hours before Vaughn and Wolf.

“We were hoping we could leave Vaughn with you, she would be unhappy in America and away from Hogwarts.” Lulu finished.

Sable nodded, “That seems fair, besides, I am her guardian. Me and Ferret have been planning on moving a bit farther north, closer to this Grimauld place your Godfather has.”

They all nodded and talked more, apparently Stalker and Lulu already knew there was a flight a few days before Wolf left. The next day they would buy the tickets. For a majority of the rest of the day Vaughn and Wolf preoccupied themselves by finally getting Sable to admit Ferret was his girlfriend, though his actual wording was, “Fine, Ferret is my bloody girlfriend, and I am bloody in love with her!”

Tempus Praeter

He didn’t know she had noticed, his Gryffindor pride probably told him it was impossible for anyone to tell, but she had noticed. Every once in a while he would wince and touch his forehead where a certain scar of his was. Apparently it caused him pain, why he refused to tell anyone was still a mystery to her though.

Stalker and Lulu had left this morning, so instead of trying to sleep on a couch she and Wolf had gotten her and Lulu’s room with two twin

size beds in it. Usually this wouldn't bother Vaughn seeing as Wolf didn't snore or anything. However, he did make a sharp whining sound in the middle of the night that was enough to wake Vaughn up and get her in a drowsy stage, "Shut up Wolf, I'm trying to get some sleep over here."

The noise didn't stop, and when she looked over at him it was obvious that he was still asleep. Nightmare, she told herself and pulled herself out of bed to wake him up. It didn't take much, just a minute's worth of shaking his shoulder and softly calling his name and he was awake. His hand immediately went to his scar with a small groan of pain.

"You okay?" Vaughn asked, concerned with his reaction.

"I'll be fine, it will go away in a minute." Wolf assured her.

"Were you having a nightmare?" Vaughn asked, Wolf nodded, "About what?"

"Voldemort, he's in this house, no, mansion but I didn't see him. Wormtail is with him, And a snake. He killed a muggle, the muggle was connected to the house in some way, a caretaker perhaps. They talked about using blood for something, a certain person's blood. That's all I remember." Wolf told her.

"And it gave you a headache?"

"No, it made my scar hurt."

"You should tell Remus,"

"I will."

"You can't lie Wolf, you were born with the apparent lack of the ability to lie. You aren't going to tell him are you?"

"Vaughn, I'm fine, and he doesn't need to know."

“I still think you should tell someone about it.”

“I told you, didn’t I?”

“Really Wolf, I’m too tired for your word games. Tell someone, or I’ll tell them for you.”

“How about this, if my scar hurts again this Summer, I’ll tell someone, otherwise, I’ll rule it a coincidence.”

Vaughn sighed, curse Wolf for being a morning person, “Fine, I just think that it’s strange that when you wake up from a nightmare about Voldemort the scar he gave you hurts. It’s a magical scar Wolf, just think about you. For now, I’m going back to sleep.”

“I’m not tired, I’m going to my Summer homework, don’t worry, I’ll do it under the covers so the light won’t bother you.” Wolf said pleasantly, four in the morning was too early for him to go back to sleep.

“unh, ‘teve” Vaughn groaned, nearly asleep again, this would be translated to ‘oh, whatever’. Wolf smiled as he reached for the flash light under the bed next to his homework, they had been placed there since Wolf got up at what Sable called ‘hours of the morning that are ungodly to be awake at’. Wolf could care less, him getting up that early was the reason he was nearly done with his Summer homework.

Tempus Praeter

Sable had been next to get his license, and was in the process of driving the remains of the Pack to their new apartment fairly close to Grimauld Place. In fact, the two were just a block away. After dropping the van (which Sable insisted on calling Packmobile) off at their new address the four proceeded to walk to Grimauld Place. Wolf was first to spot a problem... number nine, number ten, number eleven, number... thirteen? Okay, what happened to number twelve? Everyone else seemed to notice this as well since they all froze.

“Excuse me.” Someone behind them said, he was a rather creepy guy in his late forties wearing patched jeans, a matching coat, a beanie and an eye patch, “Are you the ones they call ‘The Pack’?”

They all just stared for a moment, Ferret recovered first, “Yeah Steve, how did you lose your eye?”

“Oh, didn’t lose it, just found the eye patch and thought it was cool.” The homeless man they now recognized as crazy Steve answered. “How are you all?”

“Not bad, yourself?” Ferret replied.

“Well, I ain’t dead, but I’m not a millionaire.” Steve gave a toothy grin, although it wasn’t all that toothy since he had lost five of his eight front teeth when he got into a fight years ago, “Anywho, this kind man gave me money to deliver this letter to ‘The Pack’, chose quite an ominous name for yourselves.”

“Thanks Steve.” Ferret said as he walked off after giving them the letter. She opened it.

Dear Pack,

I, Moony a.k.a. Remus Lupin, hereby invite you all to Number Twelve, Grimauld Place.

Moony

“Question is,” Ferret said turning back to the spot between number eleven and thirteen, “What number two- Oh!”

Where a brick wall had been before now stood a new door with a gold number twelve beside it. They never questioned it, just walked up and knocked on the door. Remus soon opened it, Sirius close behind him. Sirius smiled and said, “Welcome to the great, but not so noble, House of Black.”

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(A/N: Okay, Stalker was back, Stalker and Lulu left and won't be seen until at least after the war, if they are ever seen again. I will be using another challenge phrase in my next chapter that I had decided previously not to use, but I got an inspiration for it. Please send me more in reviews!)

(A/N: I think I should warn you there is quite a bit in here talking about alcohol, I do not endorse or approve of the consumption of alcohol. Have a nice day.)

To say that Grimauld Place was clean would be lie, since the place was far from that, but thankfully it was at least livable. On the second floor everyone had claimed there rooms, Sirius had his childhood bedroom, Remus was a few doors down the hall from him and Harry's room seemed to change depending on his mood. Occasionally Remus and Sirius were forced to rule that Harry had never slept and was hiding some remote part of the house, which was very possible since there was many of those. Remus was trying to help Sirius with the fact Harry had no trust for the man and was acting similarly to how he had acted when he first met Remus. He almost never talked, never made eye contact except to glare, and simply refused to eat if Sirius was ever nearby. A reason for this was given one of those mornings when Harry was nowhere to be found, only to be sitting in the dining room with a large leather bound book.

Sirius cocked an eyebrow, "What're you reading?" He seriously didn't expect an answer, it had been a month.

"Great Wizards of the House of Black." Harry replied, "And compared to most of them you're as harmless as a butterfly."

"I doubt you'll answer, but mind explaining why you hate me?" Sirius asked.

Harry studied him for a moment and pulled a piece of parchment with his own neat handwriting on it, it was short and below was a date just over a month ago and the words 'as predicted by Vaughn Hawthorn'. It read:

The Wolf should fear new acquaintances, for they shall lead him to an unfortunate fate.

Sirius looked at his godson, "And you think it means me?" Harry nodded slightly and averted his eyes.



Remus whispered to Sirius quietly, "You're the only new person he's met."

Sirius sighed, that meant that at this point in time it could only mean him. As happy as he was that Harry had said a full sentence to him, he couldn't help but hate the fact Harry was not going to let him get close. Sirius rubbed his temples, "Oh, how I wish we were back in our school days, I hadn't been in Jail, James and Lily were still alive, Peter was on our side and we didn't have a little girl predicting disasters all the time."

"Ah, yes, those were the days." Remus said as him and Sirius joined Harry at the table, Harry had returned to reading, or perhaps he was just pretending to, it was hard to tell. "You guys sneaking out in your animagus forms on full moons, James constantly trying to get Lily to go out with him, you and James in detention at least twice a week."

"Usually because of dares." Sirius added smiling at the fond memories.

"You guys dared each other to do the weirdest things," Remus nearly cracked up, "I think the strangest was when I had to ask James how the heck he convinced you to kiss Snape."

Harry chuckled softly, but Sirius didn't take it as well, "First of all, he double dared me, second of all, I was drunk."

"On a Wednesday morning?" Remus asked skeptically.

"Well, it was Easter vacation."

"Actually, to be more specific, it was Easter morning."

"Was it, I don't remember that morning, well, at all."

"Perhaps because you were drunk?"

"Fine, I was drunk on Easter."

“That wasn’t very Christian of you.”

“Stuff a sock in it Moony.”

“Hmmm, I don’t think I- wait, where did Harry go?” Remus asked.

Both men were now looking at the seat previously occupied by Harry, though at the moment, Harry wasn’t even in the room. Sirius groaned, “How can he do that!”

“I don’t know, practice?” Remus suggested.

Tempus Praeter

It was a very strange room to say the least, found on the second story, first door on the right from the stairs. The furniture was of a style that suggested it was a drawing room of sorts, but on one wall was an ornate tapestry of a family tree. Occasionally it had burn marks on it, the same names missing from it as was in all the books about the black family. Apparently they were cast out from the family by doing wrong, after a swift search Wolf found the current generation that had two burn marks, one I each of the branching off families. One was in Cygnus Blacks’ family, he had all girls, the other was in Orion’s family, one of all boys. There was a scorch marks and Regulus’ name, and the scorch mark was his brother Sirius.

This is where he had gotten confused earlier, Bellatrix, Narcissa and Regulus were all death eaters, killers and generally horrible people, yet they had stayed on the tapestry while Sirius and the other scorch mark had not. Then again, reasons for being burned off the tapestry had all seemed strange to him. There was Phineus the second, who was cast away because he supported muggle rights, his Aunt Isla who married a muggle. Marius Black had been a squib, and then Cedrella Black had simply married a Weasley, nothing that seemed worse than killing people.

“My name was burned off when I was sixteen,” Sirius said from right behind Wolf, it took a certain amount of control not to show surprise

at this, "My mother did it, hateful woman. I ran away from home to go live with my best friend, your father. That and I was a Gryffindor. Christmas break first year she yelled at me for 'bringing to disgrace to our family', like there was much left to disgrace. The next year my brother became a death eater, and two years after that he was killed at eighteen. My family said he had lived an honorable life."

Wolf knew he should be weary of this man, but curiosity always took hold of him at the strangest times, "What about her?" He asked pointing to the scorch mark between Bellatrix and Narcissa.

"Ah, that's my cousin Andromeda, she was the only family member I ever got along with other than my uncle Cygnus," He pointed to another scorch mark a generation above him, "She was taken off for marrying a muggle named Ted Tonks When she was twenty, I went to her wedding, I was the only one of her family members there. Ted's a nice guy. They have a daughter in the Auror program right now, something like Nymphadora, but she insists on being called Tonks."

Wolf frowned as he recognized what had been seeming wrong with the way Sirius was talking. He was trying really hard to earn Wolf's trust by giving any information he seemed to want, just when he had thought Sirius wasn't the person in the prophecy he had to be proven wrong. This is when his temperamental side decided to show, he stood and stormed from the room, hating the fact that people thought it was so easy to win over his trust. A small voice in his head suggested that this paranoia was coming from a lack of sleep due to nightmares, but he decided to block out the voice.

Meanwhile, Sirius just stared at the door where his godson had walked out, no, stormed out in inexplicable rage was closer to the truth. Remus had told him that Harry hadn't even vaguely trusted him until he had trusted Harry, so Sirius had assumed that entrusting Harry with his history would perhaps develop a small level of trust. Apparently, that was something that infuriated the boy. He sighed.

Tempus Praeter

There was a knock on the door, that got Sirius and Remus' attention as Sirius got his butt kicked in chess by the werewolf. Sirius rose and opened the door, Vaughn and Ferret were waiting on the other side, both frowning. Ferret sighed, "We would like to invite Wo- Harry to spend the night with us."

Sirius looked over to Remus who mouthed 'it's up to you'. Sirius smiled, "We're fine with it and he would probably be thrilled to see you, now we just have to find him."

"Vaughn?" Harry's voice came from the foot of the stairs where he was standing.

Apparently Vaughn (as she had decided to go by on her thirteenth birthday) found something strange about Harry, "¿Estás bien?" (Are you okay?)

"No dormía mucho." (I haven't slept much) Harry replied softly.

"¿Hablaste con los?" (Did you talk with them?)

"No, él es el hombre de la profecía." (No, he's the man from the prophecy.)

"I am now really regretting letting Stalker teach you two Spanish." Ferret said, "Wolf, if you want you can spend the night, your guardians have already said you can."

"Okay, let's go, I believe I accidentally left some of my stuff with you guys." Wolf said quickly, Ferret waved the two younger kids on their way.

"Sable will drop him off tomorrow, probably around ten or eleven, he's not much of a morning person." Ferret said as the two men nodded, "Oh, Sable wanted me to tell you that if Harry's too unhappy here he will... dang it, I forgot. Something like disemboweling the two of you with an ice cream scoop or something equally gross. Have a nice day."

She closed the door behind her as she left. Sirius sighed, "I can see the headline now, 'Werewolf and Ex-convict Killed by Desert Utensil'"

"Could be worse." Remus said, Sirius cocked an eyebrow as if to say he doubted that. "He could have said tooth pick, or newspaper, or a clock radio or-"

"Stop! You're giving me some pretty gross mental pictures." Sirius said before he returned to getting his butt kicked at chess.

Alius Positus

"So, has he threatened you in any way?" Ferret asked.

"No, I think he's trying to gain my trust, and I'm continuing to have nightmares and have no one to talk to. I've been reading about his family and some pretty nasty characters have come from his family. Draco is his cousin's son." Wolf told them.

"Is he really pushing to get your trust?" Vaughn asked, he nodded.

"It's harder to notice when Remus is there, but he caught me alone over a week ago and was obviously trying to push my trust. I found out that him and my dad did some pretty strange things in school, like Sirius apparently kissed Snape when he was drunk one Easter."

"Okay, that's a bit unusual. Didn't Remus tell you that Sirius hated Snape?"

"Yep."

"Well, he must have been pretty drunk then." Ferret agreed.

"It may have just been me, but you two looked awfully grim when you got to Grimauld Place, why?" Wolf asked.

Ferret sighed and Vaughn averted her eyes, Ferret spoke softly, "Apparently Vaughn can do more than just make predictions, she had a vision last night that we really think you should know about."

Wolf looked at Vaughn with worried eyes, "I have a really bad feeling about this."

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(A/N: Challenge Phrase: "How the HECK did you convince Sirius to kiss Snape" Set by Aisling13. First of all, I would like to clarify that secluded will mean they can't interact with ANYONE, therefore it will not be Stalker and Lulu because they are at college and in a workplace. That part will come up later. This cliffhanger was entirely on purpose, and I would like to inform you it will be a day or two before I will be able to update. More phrases are always welcome. Please review!)

(A/N: Two things, first of all, I would like to damn Microsoft word to hell, I almost had this chapter finished when it 'unexpectedly quit' on me. I think this is all a conspiracy. Two, as far as I know, the only thing I did wrong with my Spanish was spell 'profecía' this way 'prophecía'. I'm not a native Spanish speaker, if I messed up in another way perhaps you could be polite and tell me what I did wrong, being told that my 'spanish is really awful' does not help me at all and won't help my Spanish improve. I apologize to all of my CIVIL readers for having to deal with the long wait and this Author's note.)

After a day of being left in the dark about Vaughn's vision, the four members of the Pack that were still in England were sitting in a circle in their living room on the floor. All of the lights had been turned off and the room was dimly lit with about a dozen candles. Vaughn sat nervously in the circle, Sable to her right, Ferret to her left, and Wolf was straight across from her staring into the candlelight. Vaughn finally spoke, her voice shaking ever so slightly, "Are the candles really necessary here?"

Sable gave an impish grin, "Of course it's necessary, this situation is something straight out of some demented scary movie, therefore we need an ominous and dark atmosphere."

"We do not!" Vaughn argued.

"Oh, no my dear, it is completely necessary."

"I'm with Vaughn, I just want to find out what sort of hell our lives are being thrown into." Wolf said.

Ferret looked at him, "Oh, you're just a little ray of sunshine, aren't you?"

"Do you really think that the vision is going to be a ray of hope?"

"Not especially, come on Vaughn, let's get it over with."

Vaughn took a deep breath, "Okay, the vision was a group of a lot of images, I'll try to tell you what they all were, at the end I'll tell what a voice was saying through the entire thing. The first vision was one of the clearest, a large flash of green followed by a man and a woman screaming and a large burst of energy like a backlash, very violent."

Wolf nodded, "That's the night Voldemort killed my parents, but I thought you saw the future, that was thirteen years ago."

"I know, the next I think is the farthest in the future, a few years at least from now. It started out with this huge lawn, it had bodies all over it, all dead, and there was blood everywhere. It cut to some vantage point nearby, a cliff, bluff, tower perhaps. There was these silver animal shapes, similar to patronuses but more..." As Vaughn thought of the right word her friends threw out suggestions.

"Lifelike?"

"Furry?"

"Cute?"

"Silver?"

"Almost, but I think the word is pure." Vaughn said, "Soul-ier I guess. Three of them looked more solid than the rest, and sad, a doe, a stag and a wolf. They were all just staring on. Like I said, I have a feeling this is pretty far in the future. I think these ones are a bit more recent. The next group of images starts in a close up of Wolf's eyes and then everything morphs into a dragon, then some underwater humanoid creature, a merman I think, then a sphinx, all keeping the same green color. After the sphinx everything goes black and the eye drops into a cauldron of an acidic mixture and corrodes into nothingness. I'll admit it was pretty gross."

"Next the scene zoomed out and the cauldron turned into a dirt circle on the ground with seven objects around it, I could only figure out what a few were though, the snake's head, a circlet of a sort, and a chalice. The objects disappeared pretty quickly and the circle



gained a third dimension and became reflective and I could see people looking into the glass ball, there was something like seven of them. That's when the ball and the hundreds like it that were in the room all simultaneously exploded. In each one of the shards I could see a different person's death."

"The last scene was a bit strange, rain falling on four people in the light of a red sun rising, the rain washing away splatters of blood on them. Unless I'm mistaken, the four people are me, Wolf, Ron and Hermione. We don't look angry, or stressed, or hurt just... sad in an inconsolable way." Vaughn finished, struggling through the last few words as if she wasn't doing justice to what she had seen, Now for what the voice was saying:

Hate of old soon renewed, and times of old return,

And though they may all be gone, they are always watching,

Seeing those who survive suffer more than them,

Watching trials none so young must face, against their will,

Leading to the ultimate evil,

That may only be destroyed by his phoenix brother,

Old words will break at the beginning of the end,

The beginning of belief and the end of innocence,

And in the end only the scarred will remain to move on."

Wolf looked deep in thought for a few minutes, "I may finally believe that the dead truly do pity the living."

Tempus Praeter

Harry had been acting differently since he visited the Pack, more elusive at least. In all truth it had seemed like Harry had vanished into thin air on his birthday(This was made possible thanks to the fact that

Remus and Sirius had not been told Harry had his invisibility cloak). The strange thing was that he was startled when people walked into the room as if he had previously been in a trance and his guardians were more than curious as to the cause of this sudden change. Remus had been watching the boy sit on a couch staring at a blank wall for half an hour, "Are you okay?"

Harry jumped before realizing it was just him and Remus in the room, "Define 'okay'?"

"Not hurt mentally or physically I guess." Remus answered.

"Then I suppose the correct answer would be that I'm fine other than being a bit confused." Harry replied in a quiet voice.

"Confused about what?"

Harry thought for a moment, words not coming easily, "Have you ever been reading a text where you have questions you need to answer based off of it and you can't seem to find the answer. After looking for some say ten fifteen minutes you finally realize you've looked over a part that you think is the answer, but you could be horribly wrong and don't want to say it is because you could be called an idiot?"

"I don't see where you're going with this, but I have." Remus answered.

"Well, that's the closest thing I can relate to how I feel right now, only on a much larger scale." Harry was now averting his eyes, and Remus noticed there was a very slight blush on his cheeks out of embarrassment.

Remus very suddenly realized what Harry was trying to say, "Are you trying to say you have a crush on someone?" Harry nodded, "And who is the lucky lady?"

"Would you believe me if I said it was Vaughn?" Harry asked.

“You like Vaughn? Since when?” Remus said, now smiling, the two youngest members of the Pack had always been the best of friends and truly did make a cute couple, no matter how cliché it was to say such a thing.

“Perhaps for a while, but I didn’t realize it until a couple weeks ago when they invited me over for the night.” Harry sighed as if to say he couldn’t even believe he was telling Remus this, “The entire time I was trying not to blush or say something incredibly stupid. It was a task just to get myself to concentrate on what we were talking about. I have this strange feeling that she could have told me to jump off of the astronomy tower at Hogwarts and I would have done it, anything for her...”

“You never answered whether you had a good time there.”

“It was bittersweet.”

“And that would be because...” Remus prompted.

“I enjoyed being there, I always love being with the Pack, especially Vaughn, but she had a vision...” Harry took a deep breath, “Her first vision was about as cheerful as any of her prophecies have been.”

“You mean she had an actual vision, not just saying something she didn’t remember?” Remus said, remembering the last person to actually be visionary was in the early Roman Empire, and if he remembered correctly the person was killed by being beheaded for prophesizing the Emperor (Gaius) would die early. He also vaguely remembered the emperor being killed less than a week later at age twenty-nine.

“Ferret recalls her going rigid for a few minutes before practically collapsing, and she remembers seeing quite a few scenes, not at all particularly happy either, a couple were down right gory.”

When Remus was about to speak Sirius opened the door to the sitting room they were in, Harry promptly got up and snaked past his godfather and went Merlin knows where in the house, wherever it

was that he hid from the world. Sirius looked at Remus with a confused expression, "I have a bad feeling that I just interrupted an important conversation."

"It's fine, we'd gone over the important things, we were just talking about how Vaughn was recently discovered to be a visionary." Remus replied easily, Sirius had always been shocked about how lenient Remus was with Harry, although Remus told him over and over that pushing Harry wasn't going to help Harry get any more used to people.

"I must have been in Azkaban longer than I thought, is being a visionary a normal thing now?" Sirius asked.

Remus just laughed, "No, but I find Harry having a crush to be far more important."

"Oh, his first crush." Sirius said in that one tone all family members have that has no purpose but to be the tone of baby talk and is eventually used to embarrass you in front of friends, family, and every boyfriend/girlfriend you'll ever have, "James would have loved to be here. Let me guess, he has a crush on the Weasley girl, Ginny."

"Not Ginny, but the girl he's known for the last six years, he has a crush on Vaughn." Remus said, silently agreeing that James would have loved to see this, as would Lily, but only Sirius would talk about James without mentioning Lily.

"Vaughn? Who's Vaughn? It sounds familiar, but..."

"Okay, small little girl, blue eyes, wavy black hair... any of this ringing a bell?"

"Oh, her, little Ms. happy happy joy joy?"

"I really doubt that Vaughn would appreciate being called that, but she is a bit spritely, isn't she."

“I seem to have a distinct memory of Dumbledore saying that Snivellous calling her a ray of sunshine. Never thought I would ever hear of a Slytherin talking like that.”

“Oh, come one, Slytherins have feelings too.” Remus scolded his best friend, him and his prejudice against Slytherin.

“Yeah, just not very nice ones” Sirius said, receiving a glare from Remus.

Alius Positus

Wolf sat in his new hiding place, a small room at the front of the building with one of the few windows. The room was dark, but Wolf didn't even seem to notice, his mind was elsewhere thinking of his best friend. He chuckled quietly, “Vaughn,” He paused for a moment shaking his head realizing just how crazy his next sentence would sound if anyone was in the room, but alas, he was alone, so he said it anyways, “You're on my mind 24/7... It must be love.” He sighed, just thinking about how he could possibly let her know, after all, she might just think of him as a brother figure.

But he hoped not.

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(A/N: Once again, I apologize for the wait. This is where we break away from the books largely, especially when it comes to some pairings and the Triwizard Tournament. If you read the whole vision thing carefully you might figure out something for later on (for which my friend who knows was a bit upset about), tell me if you figure it out. And please review!)

“May I suggest that we darn him to heck?” Vaughn suggested in a bitter tone after they learned that there would be no quidditch that year because of the Triwizard tournament, oblivious to the way Wolf was watching her. She spoke for not only her as one of the Beaters on the team, but for Wolf as the Seeker and Ron as the Keeper.

Ron began laughing and everyone glared at him in their group of seven, “I can’t help it, it just sounds weird.”

“True, but that doesn’t ruin the whole point of the phrase, who cares about world wide unity if we can’t even play quidditch?” Vaughn complained, “Besides, that means we won’t be up until two in the morning doing homework because of quidditch practice, it sucks that you have to be seventeen to enter.”

“I’m not sure if this crossed your mind, but that tournament has killed wizards with far more training than we do, if any of us could enter we’d probably die.” Wolf said with tone that suggested he was being protective of her.

“Moving on, what do you think about the new Defense teacher, Moody?” Hermione asked.

“Quite creepy if you ask me.” Ron said immediately.

“He looks like a murderer.” Neville said.

Luna tilted her head slightly, “I like his eye, it looks like the eye of a-“

“He’s definitely just about the opposite of Lockhart.” Ginny interrupted Luna, for the sakes of everyone present.

“He seems like a very experienced person in the field, a bit mad, but probably a genius when it comes to defense all the same.” Hermione added.

Wolf shook his head softly, “I don’t know what or why, but there’s something off about him.”

“I want to know more about him, the whole flask thing gives me the creeps.” Vaughn said agreeing with Wolf.

Hermione looked at her questioningly, “It may just be him being weary because he’s used to having to avoid poison in drinks.”

Vaughn turned defensive, “Okay, then explain if he was worried about Hogwarts food being poisoned he ate the food without so much as testing the food for poison. Hmm?”

Hermione was at a loss for words, so instead grew angry and stalked out about forty feet ahead of them to avoid their company for the two remaining floors, Luna had already broken off to go to Ravenclaw. In the awkward silence Ron did what he did best, he started rambling about quidditch, “Did you guys see Krum? He’s the Seeker for the Bulgarian quidditch team in the World Cup this Summer, I thought he would have been out of school, but I guess not, and-“

“Isn’t he cute.” Ginny said quietly, cutting her brother off.

“What?” Ron demanded.

“Victor Krum, he’s cute.” She answered in a dreamy voice, usually a voice used only by Luna.

“No, you do know he’s five years older than you?”

“So, love knows no bounds.”

“You are not going to have anything to do with him-“ Ron trailed off as he followed her until she disappeared up to the Girls’ Dorms. He then crossed Wolf and Vaughn to go to bed, Neville followed soon after leaving Wolf and Vaughn alone.

Wolf turned to her and said softly, “I guess I should be saying goodnight then.”

“Yes, but if you have a nightmare, send your patronus to wake me and meet me in the Common room. You seriously need to get more

sleep,” She stood on her toes to kiss his cheek and smiled, “Night, Wolf.”

“Good night, Vaughn,” Wolf said barely by the time she had nearly pranced to her dorm. When she was gone he softly touched where she had kissed, he began walking to his own dorm, he sighed, “If only she knew...”

Tempus Praeter

“Welcome to Defense Against the Dark Arts, here you will learn to defend yourself against the real Dark Arts, not the simple spells your past teachers have pussy-footed around with.” Moody began, quite a charming way to introduce the first class, “Anyone ever heard of the Unforgivable Curses?”

Hermione was raising her hand, of course, Moody called on her, “The Unforgivables are three curses that do terrible things that cannot be forgiven, hence the name.”

Moody looked slightly impressed as he pulled a jar of spiders from his desk, “Thank you, Ms. Granger, for that sentence straight from our text book. Now can anyone name any of the three Unforgivables?”

Several hands were raised, Moody called on Ron first, “The Imperius curse.”

“Ah, the curse that gives the user control over the body of the victim,” He took a spider from the jar and cast the curse on it making the spider do all sorts of things spiders generally wouldn’t do, “The user can make the victim do anything from tap dance, to move from one place to another, to kill, or to kill itself. The latter two along with possessing the victim are common uses of the curse. What is the next curse? Longbottom.” Moody called.

Neville took a deep breath, “T-the Cruciatus curse, sir.”

“Good, the torturing curse. It is used to inflict immense pain on the victim, and if the curse is on you for too long it can drive you to



insanity” He cast the curse on another spider, the class flinched as a whole as they heard a high pitched screaming sound coming from the spider as it was tortured, finally Moody lifted the curse, “A truly unpleasant curse. Who can tell me the final curse, Ms. Granger?”

Hermione looked livid as she answered in a flat tone, “The Avada Kadavra curse.”

“The most terrible of all three, more commonly known as the killing curse, a green jet of light and instant death,” Moody of course demonstrated the spell, killing an unfortunate spider, Ron even looked sorry for the spider even though he despised the creature, “It’s been a spell favored by the Greatest dark wizards of the time, such as Grindelwald, He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named, and the latter’s followers, the Death Eaters. We’re going to get into some more difficult spells, but first we are going to give you all a resistance to the Imperius curse in hope some of you may be able to resist it all together. How about we start with Mr. Potter?”

Tempus Praeter

“Harry, that was bloody brilliant.” Ron said after the class was over, “You threw him off your second try and gave enough backlash to shove him into his own desk.”

“Ron! He shouldn’t have been performing those spells in the first place, they’re illegal for a reason. I’m surprised that an ex-auror would use those spells on children.” Hermione said in disgust.

“I know Hermione, that’s why me and Vaughn are suspicious, you’d think an auror would be far more conservative about how he taught Defense, we’re going to find out everything we can about him.” Wolf said bluntly, “And Ron, I still don’t like strange adults, and I don’t like them touching me, he was touching my brain and that was the only way I could retaliate.”

“Whatever it was, it was brilliant Harry.” Ron said shrugging.

Tempus Praeter

It was the night that the three champions were to be chosen for the Triwizard Tournament, everyone was gathered in the Great Hall waiting for the Goblet to decide. It was after dinner, and at precisely nine p.m. the Goblet blazed with fire emitting a small piece of parchment that was caught by Dumbledore, "Durmstrang's champion will be... Viktor Krum!"

There was cheering as Krum, the crown favorite of the Bulgarian school, walked down the hall towards the room the champions were supposed to meet in. It was only a minute before the Goblet sprang to life, Dumbledore caught the second piece of parchment, which was rather surprising since it fell on the other side of the large pedestal holding the Cup, "From Beauxbatons, Ms. Fleur Delacour."

Another Eruption of cheering followed by a young part veela nearly skipping down the hall Krum had disappeared into. Another burst of flames shot out with the third piece of parchment, the Hogwarts Champion, Dumbledore read it with a smile, "And representing Hogwarts, Cedric Diggory of Hufflepuff." There was by far the loudest cheering at his name, only because there were more Hogwarts students than students from any other school.

A fourth piece of parchment emerged from the goblet of fire, the entire hall grew silent as Dumbledore looked at it in confusion, "Harry Potter."

Harry froze, "Vaughn, please tell me he didn't just say his name."

"Sorry, mate," Vaughn said in little more than a whisper, "I won't lie to you, I like you too much."

"Harry Potter," Dumbledore repeated with anger behind his voice this time, the entire hall had it's eyes on Harry as he stood and after making himself appear emotionless he began down the hall with his head in a fog, he heard confusion resounding in the Great hall as he left. This wasn't happening, it was impossible for him to be in the tournament, he was too young to enter, he couldn't compete with

people three years older than him. He was going to die, wasn't he?  
He didn't want to die.

-

(A/N: Sorry about the short chapter, but I decided not to wait to post as a celebration for breaking 225 reviews, why I'm celebrating is a mystery to even myself. Well, here goes the tournament, be afraid, be very afraid. Please review!)

The other champions didn't seem to get why Wolf was there, in fact Krum's first words directed at Wolf were, "Did they send you

The other champions didn't seem to get why Wolf was there, in fact Krum's first words directed at Wolf were, "Did they send you as a servant?"

"Krum," Cedric said, "They wouldn't seriously send Harry Potter to be a servant. Why are you here?"

Wolf sighed, "You wouldn't believe it coming from me, I don't even believe the reason I'm down here."

A large amount of footsteps coming from the doorway behind Wolf made him move to the side as at least twenty people shuffled in, Fluer, Cedric and Viktor's parents all congratulated them for making it in the tournament. Meanwhile, Dumbledore, Madam Maxime, Igor Kakaroff, Cornelius Fudge, Remus, Sirius and half of the Hogwarts staff were in heated discussion, Karkaroff the star of the floor at the moment, "We aren't letting him participate, are we?"

"I fully agree that he should not be allowed, at his age this is putting him at a huge risk," Sirius said, his jaw locked.

Dumbledore sighed, "I would have him removed from the tournament if I could, but the magic surrounding the tournament has already bound all four of them to the tournament, there is no way around it, he must compete."

"Serves him right." Madam Maxime chimed in, "He should be punished for getting around the shields."

Then Snape came to the rescue, strangely enough, "You seriously believe that a fourth year student could get around Dumbledore's age line?"

"Then he got an older student to put it in the goblet for him." Karkaroff argued.

“That doesn’t sound like Harry.” remus said, “He’s not stupid to go looking for danger.”

“Prove it.” The Durmstrang Headmaster demanded of the werewolf.

Annoyed Remus walked over to Wolf and looked him in the eyes, “Did you put your name in the Goblet, have someone put your name in the Goblet, or otherwise find a way to enter the Triwizard Tournament?”

Keeping eye contact, although weary of all the eyes on him, Wolf answered truthfully, “No, I don’t have a death wish.”

The look in Remus’ eyes said that he trusted Wolf, he turned back to the others, “That’s enough proof for me that it wasn’t his intention to enter.”

“He could have lied.” Madam Maxime suggested.

“No,” Remus said firmly, “No matter how hard he could try, Harry could not lie if his life depended on him, he was born with out the ability.”

After everyone seemed to accept this fact Dumbledore began prepping the champions, “You four have been chosen to compete in this tournament, which I assure you will be at no loss for danger. You are to use your knowledge and magical ability to get past three tasks. You are not allowed to get help from any adult or staff members. As you may have heard, you are all bound to the tournament until it has ended and a champion declared or until death. Precautions will be taken to prevent the latter. The first task will take place on November 24, you have until then to prepare.”

Everyone nodded, the other three champions left with their parents to go to their respective dorms, Remus and Sirius had found some reason to stay back and talk to Dumbledore, and therefore didn’t notice Moody walk over and start talking to Harry. After a minute the people remaining in the room had their attention caught by Harry’s rising voice, “...So leave me alone!” Moody was doing an excellent

job of hiding the fact he was affronted by the student as Harry stalked past the whole group of them as if he was insulted.

Moody was questioned for several minutes on the nature of his conversation, his claim was that he was offering Harry his friendship and though he couldn't help him would be glad to help him learn some more advanced. When asked what Harry's reaction was Moody said, "He seemed insulted that I was offering him help, told me he didn't need my help and he could do this on his own. If I was him and was against people who were three years farther into their education I would get all the help I could."

Remus looked exasperated, Harry was not fond of being told he needed help, much less by strangers. McGonagall told him the password to Gryffindor tower, hippocampus, in case he wanted to talk to Harry, he said he would, but Sirius bowed out. Sirius knew that Harry was generally uncomfortable around him and that in his godson's current state it probably wouldn't be wise to push him.

Tempus Praeter

"What do you mean he's not here?" Remus asked Hermione who was doing her homework in the common room alone, well, Neville was across the room but that doesn't really matter.

Hermione sighed, "Ron is convinced that Harry entered himself in the tournament, so when Harry told us he absolutely did not they began fighting with each other. No one saw him leave, or when Vaughn did for that matter, but they aren't in Gryffindor tower."

Remus shook his head, generally Ron was a good friend, but he got jealous easily, "Do you think I have any sort of chance of finding him?"

"Truthfully? Not at all, if he doesn't want to be found, either of them for that matter, you won't be able to find them." Hermione said, "Don't worry, even if Ron's being a prat, me and Vaughn will make sure that Harry's ready for the first task when it comes, or at least as ready as he can be."

## Alius Positus

“You’ve been quiet, are you okay?” Vaughn asked, she and Wolf had fled to the top of the Astronomy tower. It was after curfew, but neither really seemed to care.

“I’ve been entered into a tournament in which I might die, I’m bound to it, from what I’ve heard half the school hates me because they think I cheated to get into the tournament, including Ron, I’m finally able to confirm that our Defense teacher is an imposter, and-“ Wolf said dropping his head as he leaned on the stone railing and gave a ragged breath, “I think I have a mental connection through this bloody scar with Voldemort.”

“You must have been born cursed to be unhappy for the rest of your miserable life, I’ve never met anyone with as bad of luck as you do.” Vaughn said leaning on the ledge about a foot to his left.

“My whole life hasn’t been miserable.” Wolf said quietly, “After all, I did meet you.”

“What?” Vaughn jumped in surprise.

“I can’t be completely unlucky because I met up with the pack,” Wolf corrected quickly having realized what he said, though it wasn’t hard to tell he was blushing.

“Good, that’s what I was hoping you said,” Vaughn took a deep breath, “So now you have just under a month to learn how to get past some unknown task. Fun, like a barrel of monkeys.”

“Yeah, a barrel of dead monkeys.” Wolf corrected, “It’s days like this I wonder whether it was even worth it to fight back there with Quirrell, perhaps I should have let him kill me, save Voldemort the trouble and I wouldn’t have to deal with this life.”

“Who are you and what have you done with my best friend?” Vaughn said in a flat tone, “The Wolf I knew never took the easy way

out, you were born a survivor, albeit a survivor that can't lie. You've never given up before, why stop now? You'll get through this like you have everything else."

"You're right." Wolf sighed before flashing a grin, "I'll get by with a little help from my friends."

"Wolf! No quoting Beatles songs!" Vaughn cried out, Wolf knew that one of her few pet peeves was people saying lines from songs, especially songs by the Beatles.

"Hey Jude, don't make it bad, take a sad song, and make it better--"

"Okay, I'm leaving."

"I don't know why you say goodbye, I say hello." He said as she took the Marauders map and left. The two of them had done enough sneaking around at night to know that either one could get around safely with either the Map or the Cloak. Vaughn personally preferred the Map while Wolf favored the Cloak. He was going to stay out a little longer, he just wanted a bit of time to think.

### Tempus Praeter

This is probably something really stupid. Part of her brain told herself, but she chose to ignore it for even the slightest amount of praise it would earn her. She mentally called herself pathetic as she walked up to him, "Harry, could I talk to you for a minute... in private?"

He looked a bit thrown by the question, but told his other friends he'd be back and followed her to a nearby empty class room. He looked at her with those bright green eyes that made her knees shake, "What did you want to talk about, Ginny?"

Control yourself or he's going to think you're mental! Ginny told herself, "It's about the Triwizard tournament." She told him, embarrassed that her voice was raspy because her mouth had gone dry.



He blinked a few times, it certainly wasn't what he was expecting, "What about it?"

"My older brother sent me a letter the other day saying-"

"Which one of your brothers? You do have six older brothers." Harry reminded her.

"Charlie." She answered silently cursing the fact she hadn't mentioned that before.

"He's the one with the dragons in Romania, right?"

"Yeah, like I said, he sent me a letter. He knows what the first task is and told me. They're bringing in dragons, apparently you have to take something from them." She told him, anything for his praise.

"Dragons." Harry said in a dismal voice, "Please tell me that this is some kind of sick joke."

"Sorry, but it's not." Ginny said as her spirits fell.

"Don't apologize, it's not your fault everyone wants me to die. You said dragons, should I assume that to mean there is a different dragon for each of us?" Harry asked, Ginny responded with a nod, "Good, that means that they won't learn from old mistakes. I may actually have a slim chance. Thanks Gin, it's good to know before the morning of the task."

"It was nothing." Ginny said softly as she watched him walk away. He didn't need to know that she had begged in several letters for Charlie to tell her about the task since he had let it slip that he knew something about it during the Summer.

Tempus Praeter

It was less than a week until the first task, in fact, it was only six days, nineteen hours, and twenty-seven minutes until it would begin. Once again Wolf marveled at the fact that unless he was with Vaughn or

Hermione some adult would figure out how to corner him and ask if he needed any help at all for the first task. Today it was, as Wolf and Vaughn called him but not to his face, Imposter-eye Moody.

“Harry, you ready for the first task?” Moody asked him.

“What do you think?” Wolf asked, why not mess with the man while he had a chance?

“I think that right about now you’re reconsidering your decision on my offer,” moody answered, “I think you deserve to know since all the other champions know, the first task is-“

“Dragons, there are four of them, a Welsh Green, Chinese Fireball, Hungarian Horntail and a Swedish Shortsnout.” Wolf answered, fully amused with the shocked look on the man’s face.

“And do you know how you are planning how to get past the dragons?” Moody asked, trying not to look shocked at the boy’s knowledge, failing miserably.

“Of course I do,” Wolf answered, “In fact, I’m going to go practice my tactic right now if you would be so kind as to excuse me.”

Wolf pushed pass the teacher and headed for this room he had found that could change, Hermione had called it the Room of Requirement. She and Vaughn had been bugging him about how he was going to complete the task, but he had refused to tell anyone. Ron was still refusing to so much as talk to him, Luna and Neville were going on ‘study dates’ and Ginny was often nowhere to be found. And lastly, ninety percent of the students at Hogwarts were wearing stupid glowing pins that said ‘Support Cedric Diggory, the true Hogwarts Champion’. In retaliation Hermione had made pins that Harry’s friends wore that said ‘support the Lone Wolf’. Take that Draco, Draco of course being the instigator of the Anti-Harry movement.

-

(A/N: There was questions in the reviews about why Pyg is now Vaughn, when she turned thirteen she decided that Pyg was too close to Pig, and now goes by her regular name. Well, I'm going to be skipping a lot less in the books now. Reviews are happy, brighten up my day, and keep me writing/posting. Flames that don't give me constructive feedback make me want to not post and/or play cruel jokes on you all. So review politely for the greater good!)

“Okay, our champions, and your children, should be arriving any minute now.” Albus Dumbledore told the parents of the four champions on the morning of the first task, “They will probably be very nervous, and even though you already know what the task, you are not allowed to discuss this with them. Ludo Bagman will be making sure of this. And here are three of our champions right now.” Surely enough Viktor, Cedric and Fleur had walked in and were pleased to see their parents, Fleur immediately erupted into quick-paced French that no one was sure if even her parents could understand.

It was a few minutes later that Harry came in his champions robes like all the others were wearing, only he seemed to be a lot more comfortable than the others. He smiled when he saw his guardians, though probably more Remus than Sirius. Sirius looked very uneasy about being back there, “Would you be more comfortable if I left?” He asked.

Harry laughed, a sound Sirius had not heard before, “As long as you aren’t saying that I cheated my way into the tournament I can deal with you being here. Toast?” Harry offered him a piece of toast that no one had noticed he was holding.

“Why do you have toast with you?” Remus asked skeptically, though obviously amused.

“I’m not hungry but Hermione insisted I take some toast with me to eat on the way out here. I really don’t want it.” Harry finished, Sirius did accept the toast.

“You don’t seem nervous.” Sirius commented, all he could think about was how confusing Harry could be when he wanted to.

Harry grinned and said in a hushed voice, “I know what I’m up against, more or less, I now how I’m going to fight it, and unless something goes horribly, horribly wrong, I will come out unscathed in every meaning of the word.”

“How did you find out what the task is?” Remus asked.

“I have my sources.”

“Okay, everyone gather round!” Ludo Bagman called, a bit too cheerful for anyone’s taste, “Time for the champions to know just what nasty critter they’re up against. Your jobs will be to retrieve a the golden egg, the catch is a creature will be guarding them. A female over protective dragon to be exact, each of you will reach in this bag to retrieve a model of the real thing you will be up against.” They noticed none of the champions seemed to be surprised by the fact that it was dragons they were up against.

“Ladies first, Ms. Delacour.” Bagman offered her the bag. Fluer reached into the bag retrieving a small green dragon that she held by the tail, “You have chosen the Common Welsh Green dragon. Krum next I think.”

Viktor picked the Chinese Fireball, and Cedric pulled out the Swedish Short-snout. As Harry reached out to retrieve his little model they all noticed ‘LW’ written on the back of his right hand in what appeared to be a black sharpie. Bagman asked him about it, Harry’s answer was simple, “It’s a good luck charm from a good friend of mine.” Then Harry pulled out the Hungarian horntail, from research Harry knew that species was the most protective of their eggs compared to any other dragon species. He didn’t look bothered at all by this.

Tempus Praeter

“Isn’t it typical that they would have Harry go last?” Sirius asked as they all waited in the stands for the fourth and final champion to enter the ring. They had just brought in the Hungarian Horntail, which seemed less than pleased to be there. It had found the golden egg fairly quickly and was lying next to it with it’s tail curled around it, it certainly wasn’t going to make it easy for Harry.

A small group of students began clapping as Harry entered the ring, a larger group(primarily Slytherins) were booing. Remus and Sirius now understood why Harry had said that he was fine with Sirius as long as he didn’t think Harry had cheated his way into the tournament,

apparently most people thought he had cheated to get in. Unfortunately for Harry the Dragon had also noticed his presence and was already moving towards Harry in order to protect her egg. Harry pulled out his wand and banished a rock towards the egg with enough accuracy that the dragon veered away to ensure her egg's safety.

Harry disappeared behind a rock for a moment before emerging with a shield in front of him as he began dueling with the dragon in the center of the ring. This however, did not last long, the shield was able to take only one breath of fire before it broke down, and the second the dragon swept it's claws at Harry he disappeared into thin air. The crowd, as well as the dragon, were all surprised. One of the students shouted out, "He disappeared!"

"He can't have, the wards around anyone from disappearing onto or off of school property!" Hermione yelled, the rest of the students who had read *Hogwarts: A History*, mainly Ravenclaws, agreed with her.

"Actually, it appears he is right next to the egg." Dumbledore said as the dragon turned to see the black-haired boy about ten feet from the egg and charged him.

### Alius Positus

I should have known it wouldn't stand up to being attacked. Wolf thought, when he had learned the task was dragons he began researching everything to do with dragons and had learned the easiest way to get past was to distract them. Soon after he had found a long lost spell to duplicate a persons image that was the equivalent of a hologram with artificial intelligence. It had taken about six days of practicing about two hours a day to make a solid looking image of himself, and another three days to be able to have it cast charms like a fire-proof shield(that didn't seem to work well against dragon fire, he took a mental note of this) a few charms that had very little if any effect on dragons and teach himself how to perform a banishing charm for enough of a distraction to cast the spell in the first.

Great lot of help all of that had done.

Now he had an angry dragon heading towards him and was too far from the egg to be able to get to it before the dragon got to him. In a split second decision he banished the egg farther from him and down into a crevice, now he just had to get down there too. And with a livid fire-breathing dragon, it wasn't going to be easy. He barely avoided being burned to a crisp by a few bursts of fire, but forgot that the dragon was now close enough to use its claws. He followed his first instinct and ducked putting his right arm in front of his head. Next thing anyone saw the claws made contact with Wolf and he was pushed into the same crevice the egg had been banished into. For good measure the dragon breathed fire into the crevice before Charlie and his friends were able to get the dragon under control.

After the dragon had been taken from the ring Wolf emerged from the crevice holding the golden egg in his right arm. Dumbledore announced how the points were spread out among the four and that the clue to the next task was in the egg. At that point the audience was allowed to go congratulate the champions, Wolf's six friends, including Ron, rushed down to him, Remus and Sirius were also making their way down. While everyone else was congratulating him, Ron was saying something much different, "Sorry I didn't believe you before Harry, but I know you wouldn't sign yourself up to fight a dragon by choice."

"Don't worry about it, at least you finally caught on." Wolf assured him.

As Remus and Sirius arrived, Vaughn asked, "I have a feeling that didn't quite go as you planned it to."

"Not exactly, in my version the praetograph, which is what the copy of myself is called, was not destroyed by the dragon for the other ten seconds it would have taken me to get the egg and I wouldn't have been harmed at all." Wolf said, but he didn't sound entirely disappointed with the outcome.

“I’ll hold the egg for you if you want,” Vaughn asked to everyone’s confusion, “I don’t think you should be holding it with an arm that’s obviously bleeding.

“Well, I can’t argue with that logic.” Wolf said and let her take the egg from his arm that hadn’t moved at all since he climbed out of the crevice, “Besides, I think it’s a bit worse than a scratch, the dragon got me pretty good, and judging by the amount of pain I’m in, my arm’s probably at least fractured, perhaps broken.”

“Well, you aren’t really reacting like your arm is broken.” Neville pointed out.

“That’s because I’m really trying not to think about it.”

Tempus Praeter

“Know what Remus.” Sirius said soon after returning to Grimauld Place that afternoon, “I don’t think Harry’s behavior this morning should be taken as any reflection of his current comfortableness around me.”

Remus looked up at him, “What makes you say that??

“First of all, it’s not normal for people to go from hate to friendship after not seeing each other for three months. Second, he never made eye contact.” Sirius began, “And thirdly, he didn’t seem nervous right before facing a dragon, which means he was probably using the mask of comfort to hide how nervous he was.”

“Like how James got before his Quidditch matches sometimes, especially against Slytherin.” Remus commented, “I distinctly remember that’s when he would be showing off for everyone-“

“ Primarily a certain green-eyed red head in our year.” Sirius interrupted.



“Yes, mostly for Lily. He told me once it gave him a confidence boost and thought it made him do better in the game. Frankly, I wanted to sedate him a few times.”

“Oh, you weren’t the only one, if I remember right the captain, Diggs or Drudge, I can never remember his name, was always trying to stop everyone from hexing, sedating or otherwise incapacitating his star player.”

“Man, he loved that title.” Remus finished shaking his head, “Unfortunately things didn’t go so well for Harry today. Those two scratches were really deep, you could even see where the bones were broken quite clearly, although we couldn’t see the actual bone through the muscles and-“

“Moony, need I remind you I’m not exactly fond of gore?” Sirius said with a look on his face like he’d just chugged lime juice.

“And this is coming from the man who as a teenager removed a piece of wood that had gone half way through his leg with his bare hands.” Remus replied with a similar look on his face.

“I can deal with seeing my own blood, it’s other people’s blood I have issues with.” Sirius answered defensively, “So how did Harry react to this?”

“Surprisingly well. He never looked at it, said he was better off not knowing just how badly he got hurt. Apparently he had lost feeling in his arm so didn’t feel pain, just that something felt really wrong with his arm. He spent the whole time Poppy was healing his arm calming Vaughn down. I doubt he noticed anyone else that was in the room.” Remus answered remembering just how Harry had been looking at her with the same love-struck eyes James had had for Lily, “Strange thing is, Vaughn didn’t seem to notice all the attention he was paying her. I don’t think she knows that he has a crush on her.”

“How could she not know?” Sirius asked, Remus just shrugged.

(A/N: Well, there's my alternate take on the first task, ideas for the Yule Ball and Second Task are beginning to form. Coming soon, the torturing of Ron(just a little) and Draco comes back for a while. Please review!)

It was the night after the first task that they announced it, the Yule Ball. A dance that would take place on Christmas for everyone fourth year above, though they could ask a younger student to attend the ball if they so wished. In a week quite a few people had already made their decisions and asked out others, Neville and Luna were going together, Ron had just asked Hermione, and Ginny was apparently going with some mystery man that no matter how much Ron tried to annoy it out of her she never told. Wolf, truly fearing rejection, had as of yet not had the guts to ask Vaughn yet. Ron had told him that Vaughn was considered quite pretty by a majority of the male population at Hogwarts and if Wolf didn't ask soon, someone else was going to. Wolf, of course, denied that it was even a possibility, until December fifth.

It was a free period, and they were all doing homework in the library(admittedly, Ron was begging Hermione to help him with his). Wolf was sitting across from Vaughn when a shadow fell across the table causing both of them to look up, Vaughn recognized one of her friends, though they were closer to acquaintances, "Draco."

"Vaughn." Draco said in a voice Vaughn recognized as the stiff tone he used when nervous, though to everyone else in Gryffindor recognized it as arrogance.

"Yes?" She asked after a moments pause, oblivious to the look on Wolf's face as he realized why Malfoy was there.

"I came to invite you to go to the Yule Ball, as my date." Draco got out.

Vaughn look surprised, Wolf knew she hadn't really thought about dating yet, she was somewhat composed when she spoke, "Strange that the Prince of Slytherin would be asking a Gryffindor to go with him."

Draco scoffed, "I have no idea why you were placed in Gryffindor, you would have been great in Slytherin. Nonetheless, what would you say to going with me?"

Vaughn bit her lip, Wolf knew her well enough to know she thought the offer was tempting, "I'm not sure." Draco looked surprised, after all, who could resist him? "I would like to see your reaction to something first."

"As you please." Draco responded haughtily, he seemed insulted at the lack of immediate yes.

"I'm a muggleborn." Vaughn said simply.

The reaction was more or less immediate, Draco's mild gaze to a glare of disgust, he seemed quite upset, "You're lying, you have to be!" Draco said loudly then he probably intended to seeing as Madam Pince told him to be quiet.

Vaughn's expression didn't change, "I'm not lying, both my mother and father were completely magic free from their birth 'til the day they died."

"You... you..." Draco was at a loss for words, and the first to come were not at all pleasant, "You're a filthy mudblood! And to think, I thought you were tolerable. You're just like those other (censored) Gryffindors..." This last part was mainly Draco calling her indecent names, she only flinched upon hearing mudblood having been used to cursing for years.

Finally Vaughn interrupted him, "I guess I will not be accompanying you to the ball, I'll go with someone who isn't a prejudiced arse." With that she picked up her books and half finished potions essay and left in one swift movement.

Draco was left agape, "How could she not tell us she wasn't a pureblood?"

Wolf felt more relaxed knowing that Vaughn was still open to be asked, "You never asked and she had guessed you wouldn't react well." He then followed her carrying his own stuff.

Tempus Praeter

It was half an hour later that, with the help of the Marauder's Map, Wolf finally found Vaughn in the Astronomy tower sitting far away from the stairs on the ground crying. Wolf hurried over to her and let her cling to him as she calmed down enough to talk, which took quite a while. As the tears stopped she wiped them away with her sleeve, "I just lost quite a few friends, should I have just said no having expected that reaction or-"

"Shh, what you did was fine." Wolf assured her, "You already knew they were going to leave you when you told them, would you have wanted to be better friends with them so it hurt more when this happened?"

"No," Vaughn admitted with a heavy sigh, "Though I had really been hoping that Draco wouldn't stoop so far as to say that word." That word meaning mudblood, a term that she and Hermione were not very pleased with hearing, in fact the first time Hermione heard it she ended up punching the one who had called her that. Poor Malfoy.

"He only said that because he was trying to hurt him, do you want him to have the satisfaction of knowing he did?" Vaughn shook her head, "Besides, I think I have something to say that might cheer you up."

Vaughn's face brightened, "Really?" Ahh, there was the impish face and child like tone he had grown to love.

"Yes, and I've been wanting to say it for a while, but haven't had the courage to." Vaughn looked confused, as far as she knew, there was nothing that her best friend would be nervous to say. "Vaughn, I know we've been friends for a long time, but lately I've started feeling differently..."

"What?" Vaughn said after his stuttering voice trailed off into mumbling.

“I was hoping maybe we could be... I don’t know how to say this.” Wolf looked pathetic trying to find the right words. Vaughn still didn’t have the vaguest clue as to what he was trying to say.

“Just say it bluntly, you’re good at that.” Vaughn encouraged.

Wolf sighed, silently praying she would take it alright, “You said you wanted to go to the ball with someone who wasn’t a prejudiced arse.” He stated and took a deep breath, “I want to be that someone who isn’t a prejudiced arse to take you.” Wolf’s eyes were closed as if expecting rejection.

Vaughn meanwhile was staring at him, putting this together with his previous information, and unfortunately reaching the sum fish. She blinked a few times, “Did you just ask me to be your date to the Yule Ball?”

“Yes,” Wolf answered, not daring to look at her.

“Are you serious?”

“Do I look like my godfather?” Wolf replied, it was something automatic, no emotion behind it all. but with everything going through her head at the moment, Vaughn failed at laughing.

He likes me, he’s liked me for a while, and I... I was too thick to even realize it. Vaughn thought then allowed herself to bubble over with joy, at a loss for words she threw her arms around Wolf in a hug. She felt him chuckle softly, “I guess I should assume that this is a yes.”

“It’s a date.” Vaughn replied grinning.

Tempus Praeter

“I don’t see why you two are so nervous.” Neville said to Wolf and Ron, both of which glared at him in response.

“And your date didn’t leave to get ready four hours ago.” Wolf reminded him, Hermione and Vaughn had pulled themselves from a

grand Christmas snowball fight and along with Ginny had gone to get ready for the ball. Now two of the three boys that were taking them to the ball were waiting nervously to see what all they had done. Ron was also worrying about who was taking his younger sister.

It wasn't long until most of the girls began coming down the stairs or up from the dungeons, each one meeting up with their respective boyfriend. Luna, as always, was wearing something questionable and when Neville asked she launched into a long explanation about it being a remnant of some non-existent creature. It was then about half the room's attention was caught by three girls coming down the stairs, Hermione, Ginny and Vaughn. Hermione was in light pink and had straightened her hair (quite a feat considering it's usual condition). Ginny was wearing a red dress that actually went well with her hair, which had been curled so it looked closer to Hermione's natural hair. And then there was Vaughn, who wore a sleeveless dress that matched her sapphire eyes perfectly. Her hair had been freed from it's usual ponytail she wore it in during school and was brushed straight, with the strands framing her face shaded slightly blue. She also wore a necklace with a sapphire in it, Lulu had passed it down to her so Vaughn had something of her mother's. Few people, especially their dates, could not take their eyes from them.

Hermione and Vaughn walked up to them, Ginny was still waiting for her date apparently. Wolf didn't even notice Ron and Hermione leave, or that he was gaping at her. She had a look of concern on her face as she asked, "Is something wrong, Wolf?"

Wolf snapped out of his trance like state, "No, nothing's wrong. It's just... you're beautiful." He finished.

Vaughn looked shocked, then checked behind her, "You aren't talking to me are you? Because I'm not beautiful."

"Don't say that, you are." Wolf assured her, "And it's not just because you dressed up, you're always beautiful, even if I'm the only one who notices it. I am curious as to how you dyed your hair."

“That was all Hermione’s work and Ginny’s idea,” Vaughn answered blushing immensely, not used to such praise, “Ginny suggested it, and Hermione offered to do the glamour charm. Do you like it?”

“Yes, it suits you.” Wolf answered smiling.

Alius Positus

Ron heard a sudden commotion, and curious, turned to see his sister with her date. Viktor Krum. A sudden impulse led him to reluctantly tell Hermione he would be right back. He marched up to his sister and her date and asked Krum, as politely as he could manage, if he could have a word with his sister. Krum agreed seeing that Ron was her brother and the two walked over to a more secluded spot before Ron finally showed his displeasure, “What do you think you’re doing with... him! First of all, he’s five years older than you! Secondly, he’s Harry’s opponent, and all this time we thought you were supporting Harry. I thought you liked Harry, had a crush on him even.”

“For your information, Ronald.” Ginny began, Ron flinching as he heard his full first name used in that tone, “Viktor Krum is not some eighteen year old preying on my young mind, we’re friends. And you can’t yell at me for that, because this whole tournament is about unity between the schools.”

“And what about Harry?”

“He’s with Vaughn, anyone with eyes can see that they’re perfect for each other.”

“Are you okay with this?” Ron asked feeling a strange urge in his mind, he had fallen to the primitive urge to protect his sister, which, of course, led his sister to say:

“Oh, you do care!”

“Just answer the question!”

Ginny’s face fell, “I’ve moved on... but I haven’t forgotten.”



## Tempus Praeter

“So, how long have you known?” Vaughn asked Wolf in the middle of a slow dance.

“Known what?” Wolf asked, thankful now that they had had dancing lessons, his favorite part being when McGonagall had made Ron help her demonstrate. Ron was trying to forget, but with the twins around, that wasn’t likely to happen anytime soon.

“That you liked me.” Vaughn asked looking in his eyes.

“Remember that night you told us about the vision you had?” Vaughn nodded, “That night I couldn’t have stopped looking at you if I tried. I could hardly string a sentence together. So have long have you known?”

Vaughn thought a moment, “I guess I’ve known since the moment you were taken from the orphanage, but didn’t have a name for the emotion. Just ask Sable, with you I laugh a little harder, cry a lot less and smile a whole lot more. I can live without you, it just isn’t much fun.”

“My sentiments exactly.”

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(A/N: Well, that’s the Yule Ball, and truthfully it’s a lot fluffier than I had thought it would be. Oh well, the next one probably won’t be, it’s the chapter that will take us up to February 23rd, which is the night before the second task. Reviews are always welcome and encouraged! And remember, I will not update unless I have five or more reviews!)

“You really need to figure out what the second task is, you only have three weeks left before the task

“You really need to figure out what the second task is, you only have three weeks left before the task.” Hermione nagged Wolf in early February.

Wolf shot her a look like he wasn't happy about the second task, “I've opened the egg, and there so called clue was nothing but screeching. It hurt my ears.”

“Do you want the task to be a surprise, if the last one was dragons who knows what the-

“Wolf.” Vaughn interrupted, after the Yule Ball she had decided to keep those two strands of hair blue and put the rest in a ponytail, “Have you tried opening it under water?”

Wolf stared at her for a moment, “No offense, but why the hell would I try putting it under water?”

“Because water distorts sound.” Vaughn answered, Wolf continued to look at her, knowing that that was not the real reason she had suggested it, “Okay, the real reason is the vision I had over the Summer. Remember the part with the eye?”

“ Well, it had me, then the dragon, I'm guessing that was a representation of the first task, so the next one would be the second task, which was...” Wolf's shoulders slumped and seemed unhappy, “Mermaids. And if there's a giant squid living in the lake, Merlin knows what other nasty creatures they have hidden down there.”

“Come on Harry, it isn't that bad.” Hermione said gently because Wolf was now very tense.

“Yes it is,” Wolf got up and pulled the egg from his book bag and sighed, “I can't swim. I'll be back in an hour or so, I want to figure out just what the egg has to say about all of this.”

After he left the common room Hermione looked worriedly at Vaughn, "He doesn't know how to swim?"

Vaughn shook her head, "Sable and Stalker are the only ones who really know how, Ferret hates being wet, Lulu's afraid of water, and me and Wolf never really found a reason to learn how to swim, it wasn't necessary for survival."

Tempus Praeter

Dinner that night Wolf was a bit late, his hair was wet, he was carrying a piece of parchment and looked like he wasn't sure whether to smile or frown. He climbed on to the bench between Vaughn and Ron and set the parchment on the table with the lettering facing down. "Okay, I've got some good news and some bad news. Which one do you want to hear first?"

"Bad." Vaughn said immediately.

Wolf sighed, but seemed to know that that would be his best friend and girlfriend's response, "I just spent the last hour and a half writing down what the clue from the egg was, It's as follows:

Come seek us where our voices sound,

We cannot sing above the ground,

And while you're searching, ponder this,

We've taken what you'll sorely miss,

An hour long you'll have to look,

And recover what we took,

But past an hour- prospect's black,

Too late, it's gone, it won't come back."

“Wait, they’re going to take something of yours that you have to get back?” Vaughn said, “And it’s obviously what you care most for, which could give people an unfair advantage, because what if one person has a small prized possession while everyone else has much heavier ones?”

“Well, I have a feeling it’s not talking about material possessions.” Wolf said simply, “I for one treasure my friends and family more than anything I own. I have a feeling they’re going to take the friend or family member and somehow manage to keep them down in the lake without them having to breathe and we have to go fetch them. That way it would still be fair since people are very difficult to carry and swim with.”

“Sounds about right, I think you have this right, now what’s the good news?” Vaughn asked, silently hoping that she was the one Wolf had to save.

“It’s going to take time and sneaking out after curfew a lot, but I know how I can do this task successfully without dying.” Wolf said as he took a swig of pumpkin juice, “First I just have to learn a charm we aren’t technically supposed to learn for another two years.”

“Ah, the seemingly impossible, it is what you do best, isn’t it?” Wolf could only nod in response.

Tempus Praeter

“Ever wonder what it’d be like if the sky were purple, the clouds were pink, the trees were blue and the water were lime green?” Vaughn said in a voice that suggested she was about to fall asleep by the lake as she bathed in the sun on Valentine’s Day, despite fact that it was only about fifty-five degrees.

“I would have to admit I would no longer enjoy looking at clouds so much seeing as I am not fond of the color pink.” Wolf said, rather surprised, he thought Vaughn hadn’t noticed him arrive because her eyes were closed, but he had been wrong.

“True, I’m not exactly fond of pink either, but a purple sky would be cool in my opinion.”

“Just curious, do you happen to know what the date is?” Wolf asked softly.

“Let’s see, I just got out of Herbology and I have Defense after lunch, that means it’s Thursday, right?”

Wolf laughed, “I was looking for the date rather than the day of the week.”

It took a couple minutes for her to figure out the date, “It’s the fourteenth, why is that so impor- Oh! It’s Valentine’s Day. I can’t believe I didn’t even realize it.”

“Open your eyes.” Wolf said, happy to see his girlfriend do so, then watched her eyes as they widened and her mouth fell open.

“Is that a long-stemmed rose?” She asked in shock as he handed it to her.

“No, it’s a dandelion.” Wolf replied sarcastically, causing her to stick her tongue out at him.

“Well, now I feel bad.” Vaughn said holding the rose reverently as she avoided the thorns, “I didn’t get you anything.”

“Vaughn, don’t worry about it, you don’t need to get me anything.” Wolf assured her, but Vaughn still wasn’t convinced. She then grinned and kissed him on the cheek.

“There, I can feel better knowing I at least showed I care about you.” She said arrogantly, obviously proud of herself.

“Fine,” Wolf said rolling his eyes before he got caught up in a thought, “I wonder how everyone’s going to react to this?”

Vaughn thought for a moment before she started laughing almost uncontrollably, “Oh, Ferret will be fine with it, but Sable is going to freak!”

“Pretty much, but I think everyone seemed to have picked up on it before we did.” Wolf admitted, “But I’m actually looking forward to and dreading telling Sable that I’m going out with his adopted daughter that he’s extremely protective over.”

“You should probably be glad he loves you like a brother, otherwise he might kill you.” Vaughn agreed.

Tempus Praeter

The next few weeks leading up to the second task Wolf could usually be found in the library of the room of requirement getting ready for the task. If anyone asked him how preparing was going he would just laugh and say it was going surprisingly well, he had only ended up in the hospital wing once. Apparently he had pronounced an ‘e’ instead of an ‘a’, which had him bleeding from the neck for two and half hours (slowly enough that he didn’t lose too much blood) before Madam Pomfrey could figure out how to seal the cut. Strangely enough Wolf seemed to be taking this all in good humor.

It was the twenty-third before anyone even knew it, and Wolf and Vaughn were working in the library when Wolf broke the silence, “I think I need to tell them.”

Vaughn looked up from her work, “Could you be anymore vague? Tell who what?”

“Tell Remus about Imposter-eye, Sirius too I guess. It’s not like I can stop Remus from telling Sirius.” Wolf clarified, his expression showing his lack of fondness for his godfather.

“How? You were already told that the champions aren’t allowed to talk to spectators before the task, why, I’m not exactly sure.” Vaughn said shaking her head in disgust at the ridiculous rule as she took her

hair out of a ponytail so it fell across her shoulders so it mixed with the blue strands.

“All I need to do is get a piece of parchment to him, through a handshake probably. Worse comes to worse I can talk to him after the task.” Wolf reasoned.

“Fine.” Vaughn sighed as she returned to her work blowing some of her hair from where it fell in her face, annoying her boyfriend by writing with her left hand(since she’s ambidextrous) so she would continually run into his arm as they both wrote.

“Ms. Hawthorn?” A raspy voice came from behind them, they both inwardly groaned once they knew that it was Imposter-eye. Vaughn still turned to look at him, “Headmaster would like to see you up in his office, password is... Drooble’s best blubber gun?”

“Please tell me you mean Drooble’s best bubble gum.” Vaughn said, Imposter-eye nodded and she left after capping her ink and getting Wolf to promise he’d take her stuff up to the Gryffindor tower for her(didn’t take much to get him to) and went from the room her hair flowing behind her. Moody however stayed behind to talk to Wolf, oh joy.

“Still trying to figure out how to do the second task, are you?” Imposter-eye said when he saw Wolf was taking notes from a book. Wolf gave him a strange look and cocked an eyebrow.

“I don’t know who you think you are, but I do not want help from anyone, nor do I need it.” Wolf said in a low tone that did it’s job to shake the man’s nerves, “Secondly, I’m not doing research for the second task, I’m doing my Transfiguration homework, which I can do just as well in my Common room. Now if you’ll excuse me,” Wolf said packing his stuff in his bag and throwing his on one shoulder and Vaughn’s on the other, “I should get some sleep before tomorrow.”

Wolf walked out of the library giving Imposter-eye Moody a new level of respect for the boy. The imposter, who is actually Barty Crouch Jr.,

could feel the darkmark on his arm as he thought, for my sake, I hope that kid knows what he's doing.

### Tempus Praeter

Harry walked into the stadium that had been set up for the second task with his shoulders squared, not at all nervous. Family was allowed to wish them luck quickly before the task began, no one expected Harry to do so, but he walked straight up to Remus and held out a hand for a handshake. Confused, Remus took it and felt a folded piece of parchment transferred into his hand. As the announcements at the beginning of the task were being said, Remus unfolded it and read it with a look of shock that Sirius couldn't ignore, "What is it, Moony?"

Remus handed the note over to Sirius with a look of concern on his face. Harry's writing was clear except for a few smudges that suggested that he had folded the note before the ink had dried completely, but the message was still all too easy to read.

Moody isn't Moody, this Moody is an imposter. I would watch him if I were you.

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(A/N: Challenge phrase for this chapter, "Ever wonder what it'd be like if the sky were purple, the clouds were pink, the trees were blue and the water were lime green?" set by Shortie. Okay, next chapter will be the Second task, which I have had a wonderful time thinking up, it is going to be fun. Two words: Giant Squid. And more chapters will come if you review! Lemonbomber out, yo!)



His mind was in the process of thinking about how Remus and Sirius were going to react to the fact that Moody was an imposter, but no, he should be concentrating on the current task of not dying. Pushing all thoughts of the imposter from his head he began mumbling the incantation he needed and the other sounds he needed in order for this to work, however, with the amount of practice he had been doing it was doubtful that he would forget anytime soon. Somewhere above them they all heard a whistle signaling the start of the task, he and Krum dived in immediately, followed by Fluer and Cedric with twin Bubble-head charms. Krum had done a head transformation into a shark, Wolf smirked, they were over thinking this.

Wolf pulled out his wand and said the incantation, unfortunately swallowing a mouthful of water, but the magic did it's work and it was no longer a problem. He checked one last time that his new gills were there and fully functioning, he truly was lucky he had found that spell. Now to find his helpful little friend, well little wasn't the word for it. He spoke in parseltongue, it was an off chance that he had tried it, and was taken off guard when it actually worked, "Tryphosa!" He said it in a tone so low that he was sure no human could hear.

Wolf moved about thirty feet, struggling every step of the way, or would it be every stroke of the way? Either way, he soon felt a tentacle wrap around his waist, he looked back to see the giant squid, her name was Tryphosa. Wolf smiled and in the same low tone asked, "Ready to go through this one last time?"

"Of coarse, it's nothing after what you've done for me." The squid replied, it wasn't quite parseltongue but it was close. It was like speaking Spanish to someone speaking Italian, there were differences, but you could get the main gist of what the other was saying. As to what the squid was referring to, Wolf had gotten a large blood sucking fish called a Purple Suflus out of her cave at the bottom of the lake. The creature was quite nasty actually.

"I would still like to thank you for doing this." Wolf insisted, the squid made a gesture that could probably be taking as waving it off, but nevertheless began speeding towards the mermaids' underwater city, though Wolf would have to do the hundred meters around the city on

his own because merpeople had the tendency to attack Tryphosa. On the way Wolf kept all sorts of creatures from attacking them, mainly a rather vicious group of grindylows and a rebel redcap. Wolf was finally glad that Remus had taught them how to take care of those. Before long they got to the drop off point and Harry swam rather pathetically into the city, though he knew he was first.

There were four figures tied to rocks on the bottom, he saw Vaughn first because her waist long hair was floating in all directions, next was Ginny, Krum's to save of course, then Cho, who had been voted the most emotional nuisance of Hogwarts and was Cedric's girlfriend, then there was a small silver haired girl, a relative of Fluer's no doubt. Mermaids and men watched Wolf from afar as he approached the four captives, they were simply tied with rope. Wolf smiled as he reached into his pocket for the pocket knife Sable had given him on his thirteenth birthday(along with some sort of phrase like 'keep it with you at all times since everybody seems to want you to die', or something like that).

Wolf used the knife to quickly cut through the ropes and was soon supporting Vaughn awkwardly seeing as he was rather unused to carrying unconscious bodies underwater. He was about to leave when he cast a look at Ginny, he remembered the nasty teeth on Krum's new mouth and decided to make sure that Krum didn't kill her in the process of saving her. He waited and less than five minutes later a person he assumed to be Fluer got closer(since Fluer was the best swimmer of the four of them, but instead it was Cedric who used a charm to break the rope and he left immediately. The moment Wolf saw Krum before Fluer he knew something was wrong, she had probably been attacked by something she couldn't handle, which meant she wasn't coming. First things first, make sure Krum doesn't injure Ginny.

After Krum made a few wayward bites at the rope nearly biting off Ginny's toes Wolf offered him the knife, which Krum readily accepted and then returned it before racing off. Wolf sighed, damn Gryffindor pride, he started towards the silver haired girl. Why did he have to have such a strong 'don't leave anyone behind moral'? Suddenly there was three mermen, each at least twice his size and armed, between him and the girl saying that there was only one hostage per

champion. Wolf went back a few feet, deciding that if the mermen weren't going to allow him to save her, he was going to save her using force. He called out in parseltongue, "Hey Tryphosa, could you create a distraction for me?"

"It would be my pleasure." Wolf was sure that if Tryphosa had any human features she would be currently smiling evilly at the moment. It was only a minute later that he heard a loud pounding side on an nearby underwater cliff that worried the guards enough to leave their posts. Wolf shook his head laughing as he slashed this girl's ropes too and began swimming far enough away for the squid to help him, he checked his watch, he still had fifteen minutes and a vague chance of making it. It took only a minute for Tryphosa to catch up with him and whisk him and the two hostages in the general direction of the stands, Wolf was struggling a bit with keeping the creatures away while ensuring Vaughn and the other girl stayed by his side. He mentally cursed when he heard the alarm on his watch go off, his hour was up, and a minute later he saw the stands. Once again, he thanked Tryphosa and swam the waking girls to the surface before whatever enchantment they were under wore off completely.

They broke water fairly close to the platform, Wolf reversed the spell that gave him gills and climbed out and immediately helped Vaughn(who sputtering from the water she had accidentally swallowed, the other girl was doing the same) out of the water where she was whisked off to get dried off. Then Wolf helped the other girl out of the water, Fluer grabbed her and began talking to her rapidly in French. It was only that Wolf realized that he was freezing, considering it was a bit windy and he had just gone swimming in a lake in February. As if on queue, a towel was thrown across his shoulders, he looked up and saw that it was Remus.

Remus sighed, "During the task I talked to Dumbledore, he doesn't believe that Moody is an imposter. Nice job on the task by the way."

"Certain privileges do come with being friends with a giant squid." Wolf replied, still adjusting to breathing with his mouth instead of gills, "I didn't expect Dumbledore to believe me anyway, that's why I didn't say anything to him."

“Oh, ‘Arry!” A female voice called, Fluer was rushing over, “You saved Gabrielle, even though she was not your ‘ostage. Thank you!” She then kissed Wolf and rushed off to check on her sister and was replaced with Madam Pomfrey holding a potion telling him that if he didn’t take it he was going to get Hypothermia and have to spend time in the hospital wing. Wolf promptly drank it.

Because Fluer failed to get back with a hostage, she was awarded only twenty-five out of fifty points. Cedric was first to get back, but since he used a common charm he only got forty-seven points. With his incomplete transfiguration, Krum earned forty points. It took longer to judge Wolf’s after talking to the merpeople, there was the fact that he had gotten there first and a show of moral fiber on his side, even though the merpeople were unhappy that he had used Tryphosa to trick him. In the end he was awarded forty-three points, a compromise between half of the judges wanting him to get forty-five and the other half wanting him to get forty. That tied Wolf and Cedric for first, followed by Krum and Fluer came in last.

Wolf, however, could care less seeing as he was making sure his girlfriend was okay. Remus and Sirius watched as he talked to her quietly and a minute later she burst out laughing. They moved closer seeing as they had a message for her and Wolf from the oldest members of the Pack. Vaughn caught composure as they got to them, “You made friends with the giant squid because you can’t swim?”

“Yep.” Wolf replied softly smiling as he put an arm protectively around her and got between her and Sirius, proving to Remus and Sirius that Sirius was right in thinking he wasn’t trusted.

“Sable and Ferret wanted us to give you a message,” Remus said, the two nodded to show they were listening. “They wanted me to tell you two not to do anything stupid and to take care of each other.”

“I can’t guarantee the first part, but the second we’re more than capable.” Vaughn answered.

“I’m curious, how long have you suspected he’s an imposter?” Sirius asked.

“First day of classes.” Wolf answered in monotone.

“That early, also, has Vaughn had any Visions or prophecies lately?” Remus asked.

Vaughn shook her head, “I haven’t, and it’s freaking me out a bit. I had two over summer, but I haven’t had one for eight months. It’s the longest I’ve ever gone without one.”

“Will you tell us if you have one via Hedwig, you can send letters to us with her.” Remus reminded Wolf.

“Fine, but I don’t like sending letters by owl, it seems weird.” Wolf said, proving once again he wasn’t used to wizard customs.

Tempus Praeter

Four students stood in the stands of the Quidditch pitch looking over it grimly, one could definitely be classified as more upset than the others if his expression was anything to go by. He shook his head, “Why did it have to be a maze?”

“Because the universe’s sole goal is to torture you, Wolf.” One of the girls replied.

“Well, at least it’s succeeding. There’s no way to know what I’ll run into in there.” Wolf replied.

“Well, from that vision we can guess that there will probably be a sphinx, so you just have to answer a riddle for that.” Hermione assured him.

Wolf was about to argue that he wasn’t good at riddles when Ron said, “Just no matter what, the answer is not ‘your mom’, ‘your face’, and don’t answer in a question. They don’t like that.”

“I know Ron, I read all the same books you did.” Wolf reminded him, “What’s really making me nervous is all of the security they’re setting up, every teacher and about fifteen aurors and a few other wizards just in case. Typically, the more security, the more risk.”

“And there’s a lot of security.” Vaughn commented, they didn’t need to say that that meant there was going to be a lot of risk as well.

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(A/N: Challenge phrase for this chapter “Purple Suflus” set by Pixiedust 1021. Okay, I’m going to skip pretty much to the third task, but it’s going to be in two parts, mainly because there is so much I want to include of it. Thanks for all of the reviews, keep it up!)

## The Third Task: Part One

It was the morning of the third task, there were a lot of people already out in the stands, but people relatively closer to the Hogwarts champions were waiting to walk them out to the quidditch pitch, this was mainly Remus, Sirius, Amos Diggory, Mrs. Weasley, Bill, Ron, Ginny, Hermione, and Vaughn was just getting down to the Entrance hall with a pale look on her face. Those that knew her best chose to focus on her rather than Mr. Diggory ramble on about how the Daily Prophet doesn't recognize Cedric as a Hogwarts champion. About three different people asked her what was wrong, she seemed to snap out of a trance. She stuttered at first, "I-I d-don't know. I think I may have made a prophecy and Wolf heard, but he won't tell me if I did or not. He looked really nervous when I left and I don't know what to do, he said he'd be down soon."

"How do you know if you made a prophecy, you never remember them?" Ron asked.

"One second we were talking, the next he was staring at me with his mouth open and he was in the middle of a sentence. Something happened." Vaughn assured him, "Besides, he's a horrible liar and he was trying to tell me nothing had happened."

"Speak of the devil," Bill said as Harry appeared, Cedric was a few steps behind him. Cedric managed to smile when he saw his father, Harry was not, in fact Harry looked like he had thrown up.

"You okay mate?" Ron said walking up to Harry before anyone else could (Vaughn was of course glaring at him for doing so).

"Let's see, I threw up, I'm nervous, I'm about to face who knows what in a giant maze when I have sense of direction, and I have an annoying song stuck in my head. Whether I'm okay or not could be argued with the fact that I have liable reason not to be." Harry replied in a stiff voice.

"Funny how you didn't include Vaughn's prophecy." Sirius said noticing how Harry stiffened.

“I will not deny that she had a prophecy.” Harry said after a moment, “But I will deny the contents of said prophecy until after the task, because frankly, I would rather not think about it at the moment.”

“He’s talking formally,” Hermione commented, “He only does that when he’s really nervous.” Harry glared at her, but nevertheless allowed his three best friends to lead him out to the quidditch pitch, Cedric keeping pace with them and his father, and the rest following close behind. When they got to the quidditch pitch Cedric and Harry slipped off to go to where the maze began while the others found seats in the stands.

Alius Positus

In a few hours he will return and take an innocents life.

Vaughn’s prophecy still rang in Wolf’s ears as he was slowly drowning it out with the numerous spells, hexes and curses he had learned for the task. The large group of people guarding the task were sent to their various positions around the pitch, Bagman meanwhile was explaining that if they got into trouble to send up red sparks and one of them would rescue them. As the sky darkened it was announced that there would be a staggered start, Wolf and Cedric would start first, thirty seconds later Krum would and Fluer another thirty seconds after him. Before Wolf knew it he and Cedric had entered the maze, at the first fork they went separate ways. Wolf then slowed to allow his eyes to adjust to the lighting so he didn’t have to use a lumos spell to be able to see.

He ran into quite a few creatures, most annoying of which being dugbogs and a quintaped, and for quite a while had been followed by a particularly rude jarvey(a ferret like creature that insults people, though reminded Wolf a bit of Draco Malfoy). After a while he saw Cedric running from the way he was headed shouting something about giant skrewts, needless to say, Wolf decided to go in a different direction that led him to a boggart that was easily taken care of. That’s when he ran into a golden mist, it was something definitely



magical about it and he decided he was better off avoiding it all together. Then there was a scream coming from a girl, Fluer.

Wolf was stuck for a minute before he faced the mist intending to make sure Fluer was okay, "Here I go again, being brave to the point of idiocy." He stepped through it to find himself upside down and having to use his seeker reflexes to save his glasses from an unfortunate fate... falling into the sky? He blinked a few times before deciding to see what happened if he moved one of his feet, strangely enough, everything returned to normal. He shook his head, "Well, that is by far one of the strangest things I've ever experienced." Which considering his life, is saying something.

He never found Fluer, what he found was worse. Wolf no longer wondered why Cedric had been running like a lunatic from the skrewts, they were huge. What was Hagrid feeding them? Miracle-grow? Either way, it took wolf a good five minutes of dodging and a well placed impedimenta to get away from it and continue on his route towards the cup when he heard shouting, this time it was Cedric, "What the hell d'you think you're doing?"

"Crucio!" Krum's voice followed immediately, and then Cedric began screaming. Not seeing a quick way in their direction, Wolf burned a hole in the hedge and hurried through before it closed up again. Seeing Krum he didn't hesitate to put him in a full body bind, Cedric's screaming stopped immediately and Cedric concentrated on regaining his composure. Wolf stepped over to Krum examining his eyes and muttering a soft spell, frowning at the results.

"What's wrong with him?" Cedric asked as he pulled himself to his feet looking at Krum in disgust, Wolf was probably the only thing stopping Cedric from harming Krum.

"He's been put under the Imperius Curse, you can tell because he has no pupils." Wolf refrained from telling him that it was Imposter-eye that had put the curse on him, like Cedric would have believed him.

“So what do we do with him? As much as I wouldn't feel any remorse for it, it would be wrong to leave him here to be eaten by a skrewt.” Cedric said scowling.

“I suggest we stun him, because I'm not sure how the binds will hold up, and send up red sparks and get the hell out of here.” Cedric nodded, then again when Wolf asked him, “Did you hear Fluer scream earlier?”

Knowing it was just the two of them they finished with Krum and split again before teachers got to Krum. Wolf was now running, and when he was close he saw the most magnificent creature, a sphinx, just like the one from Vaughn's vision. As soon as he saw her he remembered the code of the sphinxes, answer correctly and you are let pass, answer wrong and they attack. By his calculations, which were confirmed by the sphinx, past her was the fastest way. The Sphinx gave the following riddle:

“Pronounced as one letter,

And written with three,

Two letters there are,

And two only in me.

I'm double, I'm single,

I'm black, blue, and gray,

I'm read from both ends,

And the same either way.

What am I?”

Wolf blinked a few times and asked the riddle be given again, but slower this time. The sphinx obliged, the riddle sounded familiar and had to be out of one of the several hundred he studied so he'd be

prepared for this, which answer was the right one was taking him a minute though. It was a three letter word, two of the letters were the same and one of those letters was in the word me, it read the same backwards or forwards and- Wolf nearly hit himself on the head when he realized how obvious the answer was, "The answer is 'eye'."

The Sphinx gave a feral smile and stretched as she rose and moved out of his way. He said thank you to the sphinx before heading forward, using a direction spell he figured out the last turn that brought him into a large clearing, Cedric standing opposite of him with the Triwizard Cup in all it's glory on a pedestal between them. They each grinned at the challenge and began running for it, but when each was only half way there Wolf saw a figure in the corner of his eye and yelled to Cedric who had to dodge it, dropping his wand in the process. Cedric was now defenseless against what they both could see was a giant spider.

Wolf had a moments hesitation before going to Cedric's rescue. It didn't take long for him to realize that all stunners and the impedimenta charm did was get the big angry smile to go after him. He was being held over ten feet in the air when he figured out what would work by the process of shouting random spells, who would have guessed the disarming spell would work? Then he had the problem of being over ten feet in the air and could not defy the law of gravity. Wolf found out that the law of gravity is painful, especially the part where he fell on his leg and he wasn't sure how he hurt it, but whatever it was made his leg bleed. Ignoring the pain Wolf shot a stunner at the underbelly of the spider, that and it's twin from Cedric finally subdued the beast.

Both boys panted as they looked at each other as if deciding what they were going to do now.

*Alius Positus*

Fluer had been taken from the maze half an hour into the challenge, apparently a skrewt had gotten the best of her. She had been taken straight to Madam Pomfrey to get medical attention. Fifteen minutes later red sparks were sent up and Viktor Krum was pulled from the

maze, he had been stunned. When they woke him up he said he didn't even remember going into the maze. It was decided that once the Hogwarts champions finished the task they would be asked if they knew anything about what happened to Krum. Remus noticed out of the corner of his eye that Vaughn, who had been sitting at the edge of her seat throughout the whole lean back.

He turned to her to see her reasoning for doing so when he realized her eyes were glazed over, he quickly felt for a pulse. Hers was as strong as ever, he had no idea what to do. Suddenly she shivered and nearly jumped to life breathing hard, tears forming in her eyes and muttering 'no' repeatedly under her breath.

"Vaughn, are you okay?" Remus asked, she gave him an exasperated look.

"Wolf and Cedric are still in the maze, aren't they?" Her voice was shaking.

"Yes, but what's happening to you."

"Long story short, I had another vision. The cup's a portkey Wolf and Cedric are going to touch it at the same time and be taken far away from Hogwarts, at least Cedric will die and Voldemort will rise again, that's what my earlier prophecy was about!"

"How can the cup be a portkey, it would have had to be made by the last person to touch- Son of a banshee." Remus growled, "Moody was the one to place the cup, he must have done it. And by where Krum was found and the fact that either Harry or Cedric had to send the sparks, they're very close to the cup. There's no time."

"We can still try to tell Dumbledore." Vaughn said, "It will take us a while to get all the way down there, but at least someone will know." Remus briefed Sirius quickly and the three began making their way down to the judges.

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(A/N: There's part one of two. Challenge phrase: "Son of a banshee" set by GeniusGirl. I decided I didn't want to use the same riddle as in the book, so I kept with my whole eye theme. Never fear, more stupid Gryffindor pride to come! I should know all about stupid Gryffindor pride, seeing as every house quiz I take lands me in Gryffindor, unless I'm in a bad mood, then I'm a Slytherin. Anyway, please review!)

### The Third task: Part two

“Go for it.” Cedric ordered motioning tiredly towards the cup.

Wolf shook his head, “No, you deserve to win after all you’ve been through, especially with the cruciatus curse.”

“Must I remind you who saved my life during all of that?” Cedric asked, “Take it,”

“No, you take it. I didn’t even want to be in this tournament. You did.”

“You aren’t giving this up, are you?” Wolf shook his head, after a moment, “How about this, since neither of us are willing to give up having the other one win, let’s touch it at the same time, no matter what it would be a Hogwarts win.”

“I say we go for it.” Wolf agreed and they both walked up to the Triwizard cup, just wanting this to be over with. They counted down from three and when they got to zero they both put a hand on the cup and were wrenched away from the maze. They immediately knew something was wrong, it shouldn’t have taken this long for the portkey/cup to take them to the starting point of the maze. Wolf then realized what he had done, because of the prophecy he knew that Voldemort was coming back and someone innocent would die, and he had just caused Cedric to be that innocent person.

They all but crash landed in what they soon found to be a graveyard, the cup bouncing several feet away. Wolf thought as quickly as he could and crawled over to Cedric and began whispering, “This is going to sound crazy, but I want you to summon something to hide yourself completely or take the portkey back, I don’t care which. Failure to do so will result in death.”

Cedric went pale at his tone and quickly concealed himself partly behind a headstone and conjuring a rock to cover the rest of him. Wolf had known that Cedric wouldn’t desert him, though he would have wished that he had. He pulled out his wand and shakily got to

his feet, one was still aching and probably sprained from his fall, as he heard footsteps approaching. As it drew closer he realized it was Wormtail holding a bundle of robes as one would hold a baby, all hope that Voldemort wasn't involved was crushed when Wolf's scar exploded into pain. This was not going to be a pleasant experience.

Alius Positus

"They're both going to die." Vaughn whimpered in front of the headmaster and the other judges who were looking at her skeptically, amazed to see someone who thought they were a Seer.

"Ms. Hawthorn, I assure you that Madam Hooch will be back momentarily to tell us that the Triwizard cup is exactly where Moody placed it in the maze earlier." Dumbledore said calmly.

"That's not Moody!" Vaughn growled for the fifth time, though quieter now that she knew they wouldn't do anything without her having an idea of who it actually was.

It was then that Madam Hooch landed on the ground and dismounted from her broom after checking on the cup. All of the judges and the nearby spectators who had overheard everything were watching her. After a few deep breaths she began to speak, "The cup's gone, and the two were both there so the sphinx says. They teamed up on the acromantula that had been stunned and decided to touch the cup at the same time to tie and disappeared."

This is when Dumbledore finally realized that doubting a Seer is very bad, she was glaring at him the best she could when she had tears running down her face, "I told you, they're in great danger. Cedric is probably going to die, Wolf too for that matter and it's all my fault!" She said before allowing herself to fall to her knees.

Sirius bent down to her level, "Okay, I don't know you very well, but just how do you figure that this is your fault. Over years it has been proven that true Seers cannot have visions on command. You couldn't have foreseen this any earlier than you did."

She looked at him wistfully, "It doesn't matter, I failed to save the man I love, therefore, whatever misfortune befalls him, I will only blame myself. Although it would probably be better to blame others." She glared pointedly at Mad-eye Moody.

### Alius Positus

Wormtail kept walking until he was just six feet from Wolf and standing next to a marble headstone, who as much as he wanted to, could not find the strength to lift his wand. However he did note that Peter's nose was bent at a strange angle from when Wolf had broken it the year before. Peter lifted his wand and disarmed Wolf so Wolf fell backwards. After collecting his wand, Peter dragged Wolf(who was struggling quite well against the man easily twice his size) to the marble headstone where he tied Wolf with conjured cords a bit too tight for Wolf's liking since his breathing was restricted, more so by the gag added moments later. Before being tied up he had seen the name on the stone: Tom Riddle. Peter then disappeared from sight and Wolf decided two things, (1) Cedric needed to leave, and (2) he did not want the bundle that made his scar hurt opened. Peter came back dragging a large cauldron filled with what appeared to water, but something told Wolf that Peter wasn't dragging a big cauldron into a cemetery after tying him to a headstone to make stew.

The bundle was practically quivering as Peter lit the fire and brought whatever the contents of the cauldron to a rapid boil, the bundle seemed to want Peter to hurry up. Finally, Peter picked up the bundle and unwrapped it to reveal a face not even a mother could love, it looked like a mix between a human baby and a snake, not a handsome combination. Peter then put it in the boiling liquid and a soft thud could be heard as the seemingly helpless and equally disgusting creature hit the bottom. Wolf found himself dearly hoping the thing that had the same affect on him as Voldemort would drown and that would be the end of it. Peter then raised his wand and spoke in a shaking voice: Bone of the father, unknowingly given, you will renew your son.

The surface of the grave at Wolf's feet broke, a small bone rose from it and was crushed to a powder before adding itself to the potion. The potion was just reacting to the new ingredient as Peter, shaking



enough to put shame to a leaf, pulled a dagger, sobbing as he choked out: Flesh – of the servant – w-willingly given – you will – revive – your master.

Wolf figured out what Peter was about to do seconds before it happened, and now he truthfully couldn't blame Peter for being such a bloody coward. Unfortunately, Wolf didn't quite close his eyes in time, he saw the dagger go through part of his arm, but missed it be completely severed from it's owner, and no one could have missed the scream. The potion had turned a bright red and Peter was still recovering when he moved over to Wolf while wiping his own blood off of the dagger. Wolf couldn't do anything to move because of the stupid cords binding him, Peter recited: B-blood of the enemy... forcibly taken... you will... resurrect your foe.

Wolf guessed what was coming, but still flinched as the dagger cut a line on his forearm and blood began seeping out. Peter collected it in a crystal vial and added it to a potion, knowing his job was done he finally began cradling his stub in mourning of his lost limb. Nothing happened to the potion for a minute after it changed to a brilliant white, and Wolf held out hope that it had not worked until a thick smoke erupted from the cauldron, forming into the figure of a tall and thin man. A high cold voice then spoke two words: "Robe me."

Peter pulled himself up and with the spare robes he had brought, he clumsily dressed his master. Afterward Voldemort stepped from the fog, skin that was pale as if he had never seen the light of day, hauntingly red eyes, and a nose that was just two slits like that of a snake, and a bald head that not even moonlight would reflect off of. Even if you weren't afraid of Voldemort's power, His monster-like appearance was enough to frighten anyone. Voldemort examined his new body with a look far from a smile, yet one of satisfaction. He cast a downward glance at the sobbing Wormtail before asking, no, demanding that his servant hold out his arm.

Wormtail looked hopeful and held out his severed arm, but Voldemort asked for his other arm with a bone-chilling laugh, and Wormtail did so, though was slightly reluctant. Voldemort pulled down the sleeve to reveal a skull and snake on Wormtail's arm, the Dark Mark. He muttered something about his followers and pressed a finger to the

Mark, which caused Wolf's scar immense pain and Wolf himself was wondering how he didn't cry out. When Voldemort removed his finger the pain lessened and he was able to see the Mark had turned black. The closest look one could manage to a smile while being a cruel Dark Lord was on Voldemort's face as he said softly, "How many will be brave enough to return when they feel it? And how many will be foolish enough to stay away?"

He was calling his followers, and instead of thinking of his own life, he was thinking about whether Cedric would get out or not. Voldemort paced a moment or so, then got bored of that and apparently tried a new way to kill Wolf, bore him to death with family history. When he was finished the first deatheaters were arriving, cloaked in black and wearing masks. Each one looked upon their master in awe, kissed the hem of his robes, and then took a place in a circle around Voldemort, Wormtail and Wolf tied to the headstone. There were gaps, some larger than others, but Voldemort wasn't expecting anymore people and began ranting as follows:

You are all loyal, but not really because you didn't search me out, you are all disbelievers, guilt trip, gave Wormtail silver hand for his unwavering loyalty, guilt trip, guilt trip, guilt trip, I will have to kill him, him, and eh, why not him too. We have guest Harry Potter in our mist, blah, blah, blah, long drawn out story of how he came back to power, Triwizard tournament, gloat, turned to Wolf and "Crucio." (This is my shortened version of J.K.'s like five page monologue by Voldemort.)

Before this Wolf would have said that over his fourteen years he had experienced some of the worst pains in the world. That one word from Voldemort proved his past pains to be nothing more than child's play as his bones burned and his head seemed to split open at his scar. He couldn't even tell if he was screaming, but it ended just as suddenly as it all began. He heard a pitched laugh, "Those of you who thought that there was a slight chance that this boy could defeat me, realize now, you are wrong."

"Master!" A woman called from the circle, Voldemort turned to her angrily and then saw she was pointing to Cedric who looked like he had moved to try to save Harry, but had been caught like a deer in

the headlights. Voldemort smiled cruelly before saying, “Bella, if you wish you may punish our intruder.”

The spell that Krum had used on him just over an hour before hit Cedric anew, and he was screaming. Harry’s anger rose, and when he was angry as a child his accidental usually showed, and without his wand it lashed out of control lighting Bellatrix’s robes on fire along with several other death eaters and generally causing mayhem. Cedric snapped out of the curse and Wolf yelled, “Get out of here, NOW!”

Cedric didn’t need to be told twice, he jumped towards the cup and disappeared. Once the death eaters got the fire sorted out Voldemort was looking at Wolf murderously, “You just destroyed any hope of escaping, Potter. Wormtail, untie him and give him back his wand.”

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(A/N: I lied, there will be three parts to the Third task, and by request of... someone who reviewed that I cannot recall the name of at the moment, I have saved Cedric. Like always, prophecies can be changed and don’t always happen. Wolf worked towards the goal of saving Cedric’s life and it worked out. Please review, I want to know what you guys think about me saving Cedric.)

### The Third Task: Part 3

The judges were now in a bit of a panic, and weren't expecting a Hufflepuff to suddenly appear in their midst, yet Cedric did with the help of the cup/portkey. Soon he was surrounded by his dad, Dumbledore and quite a few others. When asked if he was okay he looked confused and said he wasn't sure, the same answer was given for what happened and where Harry was. Madam Pomfrey pushed through them casting glares into the ground, "For Merlin's sake, some of the best wizards in the world and not one of them can realize a boy is traumatized. I'm taking him to the hospital wing so he can heal without pestering. In his state, interrogation will get you nowhere."

She and Amos Diggory pulled him to his feet and were walking away when Cedric turned back to them with a strange look in his eyes, "Please help him, he saved my life three times tonight, and this last time might cost him his."

"What did he save you from?" Amos asked his son.

Cedric shook his head, "It all happened so fast, I'm not even sure anymore." Madam Pomfrey said he needed time, and escorted him off.

### Alius Positus

Wolf had no idea what to do, after all, he was trapped in a graveyard at night with a large group of people that more or less wanted him dead. Peter untied him and he stumbled a bit because of his injured leg, it wasn't quite ready to support weight yet. Nevertheless, he didn't show how much pain he was in as he was handed his wand, all he needed to do was survive until he had a chance to escape, which could very possibly be never. The circle of death eaters moved in so there were no spaces and Wolf and Voldemort stood face to face inside the circle, Voldemort talked softly, "Have you been taught to duel, Harry Potter?"

Wolf resisted laughing at Lockhart's so called dueling club, he had learned more on his own than he had from Lockhart. Then again,

even if he did know stunners, impedimenta, expelliarmus and several other basic spells, there was no way to avoid the killing curse. His features hardened, better to die fighting than live as a coward. A smile was playing at Voldemort's lips, "First we must bow to each other." Voldemort bowed slightly, enough to notice but not enough to lose eye contact, "Come, the niceties must be observed... The wizarding world wouldn't want their precious golden boy to not mind his manners... Bow to death Harry."

After allowing himself a few seconds to not do something stupid, like stick out his tongue or claim that he had no manners, he gave a short bow that like Voldemort's, could barely be considered a bow. Harry and Voldemort rose in unison and Voldemort continued, "And now you face me like a man, straight-backed and proud, just like your father died-" Wolf decided at that point that Voldemort had crossed a line, you don't insult the parents of someone your dueling. In the past years Wolf had decided that even though he had never known his parents stories from Remus proved they were respectable and didn't deserve to be demeaned by scum like Voldemort talking about them. "And now, we duel."

Wolf hadn't been prepared for Voldemort to shoot another crucio at him when he had barely finished his sentence. For the moment, he made it his goal not to scream, not let Voldemort have the satisfaction of knowing the pain he caused. After what seemed like an eternity it stopped as suddenly, he flinched only the slightest bit, but Wolf didn't doubt that all present noticed, at least Voldemort did. The only emotion in Voldemort's eyes was happiness, "A short break... That hurt didn't it, Harry? You don't want me to do that again, do you?"

Don't answer. A wise voice in his head told him that sounded somewhat like Sable, who had always told him that begging did nothing but make you look pathetic. Voldemort was growing impatient, though his voice was still quiet, it was far more insistent, "I asked whether you wanted me to do that again. Answer me! Imperio!"

Wolf did not like the sudden intrusion into his mind, he could feel Voldemort in his brain, invading his personal bubble. A quick flare of anger did the same thing to Voldemort as it did to Moody, it shoved him back knocking him off of his feet. Wolf looked at him in disgust,

“No one tells me what to do, especially not lame excuses for dark lords. I don’t know if you’ve realized this, but I’m not afraid of someone who can’t use their brain. I know for a fact that you have at least two of your followers at Hogwarts, Karkaroff and the guy impersonating Moody, perhaps even Snape. Why not just have one of them kidnap me earlier this year?”

Voldemort had risen to his feet, clearly insulted, but angry beyond words, and his anger grew the minute that the name Moody was said, “Oh, I’m sorry, was I not supposed to know that my Defense teacher was a deatheater? If you must know it’s painfully obvious to anyone who takes his class.”

Voldemort was lived, and immediately shot the killing curse at him, Wolf let his instincts take over and he cast the disarming spell. Wolf’s red spell and Voldemort’s green one met in between them and something like an electric charge spread from his wand into his hand making Wolf subconsciously clutch his wand tighter. With big eyes he saw that there was a thread of magic connecting his and Voldemort’s wands that was a distinct gold color, on the other end Voldemort seemed to be in the same situation as Wolf. Wolf wondered why being a bloody hero didn’t come with some helpful handbook, or “Being a Hero For Dummies”, nothing else would have been able to prepare him for his feet leaving the ground just as Voldemort’s were on the other end of the golden thread. After they were sufficiently air-born they were moved over a clearing free of headstones, the circle of deatheaters following below them.

The gold thread spouted out a thousand more gold threads that connected every which way until Wolf and Voldemort were encompassed in a dome shaped web. Voldemort shouted to his followers not to do anything and began valiantly trying to break the connection. Two things stopped Wolf from doing the same, first of all he considered most of what Voldemort had done so far to be stupid so copying what he did wasn’t a smart move, besides he had fallen from over ten feet once already and Wolf wasn’t ecstatic at the thought of it happening again. That’s when the music started, the phoenix song he had heard in the chamber of secrets two years before.

That's when bead-like balls of energy began sliding towards Wolf on the thread connecting him and Voldemort, the closer they got the harder his wand vibrated. It came as common sense that he should keep the beads away, and he focused solely on that, the beads slowly came to a halt before moving the other way. Voldemort now had a look of astonishment on his face and a slight tinge of... Oh cute, Voldemort was a bit scared. Curiosity hit Wolf as the first bead nearly hit Voldemort's wand, a moment more and it was absorbed into Voldemort's wand, and horrible screams began drowning out the phoenix song. Voldemort's eyes widened in shock as a smoky hand emerged from his wand, followed by semi-ghost versions of the old man Wolf had seen killed in his dream last summer, Bertha Jorkins, followed by Lily and James, all encouraging him to hold on until his Father had finally emerged.

James walked briskly over to his son began talking in a low voice so that the tortured Voldemort couldn't hear, "When the connection is broken, we will linger only for moments... but we will give you time... you must get to the portkey--"

"Portkey's gone." Wolf said, confused how he wasn't at all nervous around this adult, deciding it was only because he was a smoky-thing.

"What?" James looked around and noticed that Cedric wasn't there, and neither was the portkey, "Bloody hell! This screws everything up."

"I just need to get out and quick, right?" Wolf asked.

"If you can... but like you can get away from any of them, though by the look of it you could get out of the circle easily."

"Don't worry, I have a plan." James smiled, and farther off so did Lily. Wolf was just hoping his hair wasn't really as messy as his father's was in smoke form and mentally preparing to do a couple spells he hadn't really tested. James nodded for him to break it and Wolf did so immediately and ran as fast as he could knocking over two deatheaters, quickly casting a moving shield charm behind him, he could hear spells hit it as Voldemort yelled for people to stun him. As he ran Wolf pulled off a disillusionment charm making him invisible,

dropped the shield charm and changed the direction he was running to. He ran for about ten minutes, at least until he nearly passed out. He sighed in acknowledgement that the first part of his plan had worked. Reaching in his pocket he was glad to find he had a few galleons in his pocket, a relief considering he was at the moment calling the Knight Bus.

### Tempus Praeter

Most of the spectators had left seeing that it was quite late, the judges, Hogwarts staff and close friends to Harry were attempting to figure out how to find him, but without Cedric that was nigh impossible. Vaughn had long ago curled up a good twenty feet from everyone else in a position that suggested she was crying. Dumbledore was finally told most of Vaughn's prophecies and was in the process of arguing with Fudge that Voldemort might actually be back. Fudge said that if Voldemort was back, Harry would be dead by now, which didn't help the mood of everyone at all.

"Stupefy!" A voice came from the entrance to the pitch, shortly followed by Mad-eye collapsing due to the stunner. Everyone looked in the direction of the shout to see Wolf standing in the light, his chest heaving. He looked tired, he had blood all over his right arm and one of his legs, he was a mess. Vaughn ran up to him and captured him in a hug, still crying Harry hugged her back and after a moment they both sauntered over to where quite a few people were staring at him with wide eyes.

"D-did you just..." Fudge began, "Stun your defense teacher?"

"No," Harry replied in a low rasp, "I stunned someone impersonating my defense teacher. Give it about... ten, fifteen minutes tops, and you'll see for who he truly is."

Remus was next to talk, "Are you okay? What happened? Why's Cedric acting loopy?"

"What happened? I was pretty much kidnapped and used to resurrect Voldemort and then forced to duel him, Cedric was cruciod



twice, once by Krum in the maze, once by Bellatrix and I had to save his life three times tonight. As for whether I'm okay, for the moment I'm glad not to be dead." Wolf replied, eyes shifting to Vaughn as she began washing the wound on his arm with a cloth she conjured.

"Impossible!" The Minister said, "This is blasphemy! There's no way You-Know-Who can be back."

Wolf got a look in his eyes that made him resemble an angry Sable, "Fine, let's go with that theory. That means that there's some other dark lord trying to kill me who happens to have Voldemort's old followers that respond to the dark mark that was given a new body using my blood who happens to be the son of Tom Riddle Sr."

Fudge looked at him skeptically, "You must be lying, we have no reason to believe your claim is true and anything Cedric says can't be taken seriously because he's in a state of trauma. Now, as minister I do need to get some sleep tonight due to an early meeting. Goodnight."

They all watched as Fudge and the other members of the ministry left, afterwards Remus asked, "Do you by any chance know where you were?"

Wolf nodded, "The cemetery in Little Hangleton, the town where Voldemort's father is buried."

"You saved him..." Vaughn said softly, "You changed fate."

"I didn't want to be the reason Cedric died." Wolf replied, "Are you okay?"

"You're alive, I couldn't be better."

"What the-" Ron said looking fixedly at where Moody was, well, it obviously wasn't Moody anymore. Kingsley Shacklebolt, a auror that had chosen to stay just a bit longer declared him being Barty Crouch Jr. and after Wolf told him about the imperius curse he put on Krum

and varied things he had done during his classes. That was enough for the auror to arrest Crouch and take him away.

After the Weasley's had gone home Sirius and Remus told Wolf and Vaughn that they would be spending the first couple of weeks of summer with the Pack before both would probably live at Grimauld until term started in September. Sirius sighed, "It isn't fair, you went through all that trouble with Voldemort and Fude'll probably have a story in the prophet saying you're crazy so no one will believe you."

Wolf smirked, "Like they would believe me anyway."

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(A/N: Next chapter is the Summer, just so you know, Wolf gives a majority of his winnings to Fred and George and exchanges the rest into muggle money before giving it to Sable and Ferret. Next chapter, Sable is rather unhappy and we learn a bit more about him... and the Solitary thing comes into play. Thank you for the feedback on Cedric, keep reviewing! I probably won't be able to update until Monday or Tuesday, so, TTFN!)

It had been mere weeks since the third task had happened and all of the students were currently on the Hogwart's Express heading home. Not much had changed in that time, the Ministry still thought that Wolf had made everything up, and Cedric had gone a little loopy from the crucios so no one would say his word was in any way credible, Wolf had ended the year in the Hospital Wing because his use of the injured leg had increased the injury tenfold, and Vaughn was clinging to Wolf for dear life. Vaughn had feared death her whole life, at times pretended it never existed, so to see death in her visions was like seeing her worse fear come to life... er, death. Therefore, when Wolf was able to save a life the stars had condemned to death she thought of him as a god, which would have gotten Wolf screaming were it anyone else. Wolf had actually been pretty quiet since facing Voldemort in the flesh, especially regarding the subject. For instance, no one knew what exactly what happened, why Wolf was needed to restore Voldemort, and other than a brief mention at the end of year feast, no one knew of the Priori Incantem(which got on all their nerves because Merlin knew when they would get the chance to look it up), all they knew is that it threw him off a bit.

"So... You think our next Defense teacher is going to try to kill you?" Ron asked breaking what may have been an uncomfortable silence to him, but was a perfectly agreeable silence to everyone else.

"Ron, I'm pretty sure that's one of the requirements for the job." Wolf replied in a voice of disgust, because while he was mildly creeped out by Imposter-eye, upon meeting Mad-eye there was no doubt in his mind why they called him mad. Wolf had said he respected how paranoid the man was, it was better to be over conscious of your surroundings then dead.

"And what about Remus? He didn't try to kill you." Vaughn reminded him, she was leaning on his shoulder with his arm around her. They had decided that while staying with the Pack they were going to tell Sable before he saw them holding hands or hugging so he wouldn't freak out and have an aneurism.

"That's because Sirius was after me. Only Voldemort and one other person are allowed to try to kill me at one time. It's a rule." Wolf

replied easily, noticing that they had entered London and were slowing down considerably. When they got off the train Ron and Hermione, and Ginny all waved goodbye as they saw their families. Vaughn and Wolf were wheeling their trolleys slowly across the platform holding hands in the short amount of time they had before seeing Ferret and Sable.

“Bloody Hell!” The two of them heard an all too familiar voice call from about twenty feet to the left of the barrier between the magical and muggle world. It was Sable, and by his tone he was nowhere near pleased. The couple hesitantly looked over at Sable and Ferret, both seemed extremely shocked, and Sable had let his jaw fall. After a minute or so Ferret’s expression softened to that of a girl confronted with a small furry mammal, especially a kitten or a puppy. Vaughn and Wolf sighed as one, and reluctantly began heading over to the older members of the Pack.

“Ohhh!” Ferret exclaimed, in the same voice aforementioned girl would exclaim upon seeing the small furry mammal, “We didn’t know you two were going out. Sable, could you close your mouth? It makes you look rather undignified.”

Sable seemed to snap out of the trance he was in and promptly snapped his mouth shut sending a glare at his girlfriend before turning to Wolf and Vaughn, “So, how the Hell long has this been going on?”

“December.” Wolf answered promptly, quite a feat considering the near murderous look on Sable’s face.

“December!” Sable yelled, catching the attention of quite a few people, “You’ve been going out for six months and never bothered to tell us?”

“I would just like to point out that it’s been five months, twenty-six days, four hours and... seventeen minutes.” Vaughn said after checking her watch.

“You guys know how to send a letter! Is it too much to ask for you guys to take five minutes to write a bloody letter?” Sable said.

“Nigel Anthony Hawthorn!” Ferret scolded, the middle name causing Sable to freeze, “Ever consider they may have decided not to tell us because they knew you’d freak out?”

“They’re practically siblings!”

“No. They’re best friends and have been for years, growing closer and closer as the years have gone by. Logically, they would have decided to try a relationship eventually.” Ferret reasoned, “Now, I say we go home because everyone’s staring at us like we’re freaks and I made cookies. Chocolate cookies.”

“You can cook?” Wolf and Vaughn asked in unison.

Ferret shrugged, “Don’t know, tell me after you try the cookies.”

Tempus Praeter

Turns out, Ferret’s cookies weren’t horrible, but the hot sauce she added sure made it an interesting venture for everyone. Vaughn and Wolf ended up chugging water, poor Sable didn’t want to insult her, so pretended he was fine. Well, to be truthful, Sable wasn’t acting anything like himself, he was treating Ferret like she was made out of glass, and every time Vaughn or Wolf tried to get him to talk about it, he would get defensive and take them on some guilt trip about not telling him anything about their relationship. It was lunch time three days before Vaughn and Wolf were supposed to leave that they finally got tired of it and went about finding things out the blunt way. Wolf’s exact words were, “Is Ferret pregnant?”

Ferret dropped her glass on the table and grew a rather merry shade of red, and Sable began choking on his sandwich. Ferret recovered first, “No! I most certainly am not! What would make you think that?”

“Me and Wolf have been talking, and that’s the only thing we decided that it could be because of your and Sable’s behaviour.” Vaughn replied promptly.

“You guys might as well just tell us what’s wrong, what we’ll come up with is probably worse than it actually is.” Wolf said.

Ferret sighed, “You’re right... You tell them Sable.”

“What!” Sable exclaimed as she gave him the duty, “What makes you think I want to tell them?”

“It does mainly concern you.”

“It’s in no way pleasant news, and I don’t want to upset them.”

“Don’t care. Tell them.”

Sable looked displeased to see the least, but relented anyway, “Okay, I know you all know some of this if not all, but bear with me. My father was... a cruel insufferable jerk who thought that coming from a rich family would pardon every little thing he did. Such as, killing my mother in front of me when I was two years old because she said he was irresponsible regarding his son. My father was reminded of her every time he looked at me, so he abused me until I was eleven. I stole his pocket knife and killed him in his sleep, this pocket knife to be exact.” He pulled a pocket knife and showed the younger two the blade for the first time, in his nervousness he folded the blade in and out as he pursed his lips.

“This is where things get difficult. The neighbor girl that night was on a moonlit stroll with her boyfriend and saw me running away along with the blood trail coming from my knife. We ran into each other a few days ago, she remembered it all. The police are currently looking into it, but I’m not safe, notice I haven’t left the house. Everyone thinks I’m a mindless murderer.”

“Oh.” Wolf said softly, “I assume that means you will be going into hiding.”

“Yes, besides, you said Voldemort is back, we don’t want to be used against you. It’s best if we aren’t found.” Sable said, “Though there is one decision we haven’t made yet.”

Sable was staring directly at Ferret who was staring at the table, “I told you, I just need some more time to think.”

Vaughn and Wolf turned their eyes back to Sable, who replied in a wistful way, “I proposed to Ferret,”

Wolf realized that Ferret hadn’t given Sable an answer, hence the strange behavior, he mouthed a question and she nodded slightly before telling the other two she and Wolf were going for a walk.

They walked a couple blocks in companionable silence before Wolf asked why she hadn’t made her decision yet. She shook her head, “I don’t even know, when I think about him I see who is today, a respectable twenty-four year old man who cares deeply for his friends and wants a family, to be loved. But every time I look at him I see that angsty teenager that hated me with every fiber of his being seven years ago.”

“If it helps you any he never hated you.” Wolf replied, “I know roughly how he felt, The first years of his life he was shown love is bad, he loved you all this time, he’s just now realizing it’s not a sign of weakness. Answer a few questions for me, how long has he been your friend?”

“We have had a companionable relationship for six years.”

“Do you like him as more than a friend?”

“Of course.”

“Has he told you that he feels the same way?”

“Yes.”

“Are you marrying the man you love today, or the teenager you knew seven years ago?”

“Okay, okay, I get it.”

“You both want to be loved, and want to love each other, and you know that. Tell him.”

“You’re right, I’ll tell him when we get- Bloody hell, wasn’t it just like seventy-five degrees?” Ferret asked when the temperature suddenly dropped to somewhere in the thirties(Fahrenheit).

“Yeah, I only know one thing that can... Oh Merlin, it can’t be happening here.” Wolf groaned as he recognized the phenomena of dementors. They were at a corner, and in the nearly dark streets he could just barely make out the dark shadows of the vile creatures that had them surrounded. The memories of his parents’ deaths and other rather unpleasant memories began cycling through his head. Wolf felt his wand in his pocket, but knew if he did anything he would be expelled, have his wand snapped and... he might as well paint a bright red target on himself and pay Voldemort a visit. That’s when Ferret fainted with a whimper, and Wolf suddenly didn’t care about being expelled, it was better than having one of his best friends’ souls sucked out. He pulled out his wand and cast his patronus charm, repelling all four dementors. He kept the patronus up as he scooped up the unconscious Ferret the same way a groom would carry his bride, personally glad that he had built enough muscle for this during Quidditch practices.

The run back to the Pack’s house seemed three times as long as the walk away from it. Vaughn and Sable were building a house of cards when Wolf walked in, Sable rushed to Ferret’s side knocking over the tower of cards in the process. Sable took her from Wolf and set her gently on the couch before demanding ‘what the hell happened’. Wolf rubbed his arms to try and restore warmth, “Dementors.”

“Dementors? Here?” Vaughn said, Sable didn’t understand what was going on, so busied himself by covering his soon to be fiancée with a blanket.



"I know, it's weird, but true." Wolf assured her, Vaughn nodded and pulled chocolate from her coat pocket and handed it to him.

"So what do we do now?" She asked.

"Well, you two should probably wait for Ferret to wake up, but I need to go to Grimauld Place."

Vaughn looked surprised at the last part, "Why?"

"In order to get away from the dementors I had to cast a patronus charm." Wolf admitted.

Vaughn froze, "You're right, they're probably sending Remus a letter as we speak... Are you going to be expelled?"

"I shouldn't be, it was in defense."

Vaughn bit her lip before giving him a quick hug, "Go, spend the night visit tomorrow regardless of being expelled or not. If you don't, I will go over and drag you back over here and we're running away with them, right Sable? ...Sable?"

Sable was too occupied with brushing Ferret's sort hair off of her forehead, regardless of the fact it just fell back onto her forehead.

"...Okay, just go, I'll keep an eye on this idiot." Vaughn said shaking her head at the man.

Tempus Praeter

"As long as the ministry doesn't believe that Voldemort has returned, none of those plans will work." Dumbledore sighed in the middle of the meeting of the Order of the Phoenix, only to be cut off by a knock on the door. Everyone looked at each other, all knowing that all the members of the order were currently present, Sirius stood to go check the door, his wand drawn. Several people looked like they

were ready to run to Sirius' aid if necessary, Severus Snape was not one of those people.

"Harry?" Sirius' voice called, before they heard two steps return to the dining room, Harry was shaking, but had an expression that didn't show whether it was from anger, fear, a sugar rush, or the fact that it was a cold day. Sirius had him sit in a chair, he, Moody and several others looked unsure as to whether it was really Harry.

"How are we supposed to know that you're really Potter?" Moody growled, Harry was forcing himself not to smile at the true Moody's behavior.

"Well, you could try asking me personal questions, the only problem is you wouldn't know the answers." Harry replied dryly.

"Perhaps we could get veritaserum?" Kingsley suggested.

"I have an idea!" Tonks said, then her face fell, "Except he can't use magic."

"You're all making this much too complicated," Remus rolled his eyes, "Harry, would you mind speaking parseltongue for us?" Harry responded with several hisses that were much too depressing to translate.

"Voldemort can speak parseltongue too." Molly Weasley pointed out.

"Oh, for Merlin's sake!" Harry groaned, "If I was really Voldemort, would I have disguised myself as Harry Potter when I could have just barged in with an army and kill you all?"

The room was silent for a full minute, before Remus coughed and said, "Now that we have that settled, why are here? You're supposed to be with the Pack for another four days."

"I'll take that to mean you haven't gotten the letter from the Ministry of Magic yet." Harry answered.

“What letter?” Remus said as a Ministry owl swooped into the room and deposited a letter on the table in front of Remus.

“I believe that would be the letter.”

Remus opened the letter and read swiftly, his eyes getting big as a look of shock descended upon his face before looking at Harry, “You WHAT?”

“It was in self defense, I swear.” Harry argued.

“What did he do?” Sirius asked.

“Magic, outside of school.” Remus replied, “You do realize that they could expel you for that?”

“I wouldn’t have used magic if it hadn’t been for the dementors.”

“In London? In the middle of the day?”

“Yes.”

“Wait, why were you alone?”

“I wasn’t, I was walking with Ferret.”

“Great, the only witness is a squib, and I don’t think they can see dementors.”

“Witness?”

“You have a trial in two weeks.”

“Trial?” Kingsley said as if it was ridiculous, “Usually this is just something you meet with a member of the Wizengamont and one person makes the decision after listening to the kid’s side of the story.”

“That worries me too.” Remus agreed.

Tempus Praeter

The entire Wizengamont was gathered, all staring at one small boy in a chair in the middle of the room. There were only three other people in the room, Remus, Sirius and Ferret. Wolf had convinced his two guardians that she needed to be there, why was a mystery at the moment. However, the trial was called to order and Wolf was asked how he pleaded to having used a patronus in broad daylight in muggle London while he was under age, Wolf’s answer was simple, “It was self defense.”

“From what?” Susan Bones asked.

“A dementor.”

“In London?”

“Apparently so.”

“And I suppose we are supposed to blindly trust that this is true? Coming from the boy he claims He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named has returned.” A woman resembling a toad shot back.

“First of all, Voldemort has returned,” Wolf rolled his eyes as they all flinched, “Secondly, I do have a witness who did see the dementors though her reaction was to pass out.”

It was then that Ferret stood and walked over to stand by Wolf, one of the men recognized her aloud as Bridget Prewett. Ferret sent him her best death glare, “Hawthorn, it’s been Bridget Hawthorn for a week, thank you very much.”

“For those of us unfamiliar with you, please state your name, age, blood status, then you can give your account of what happened.” One of the ladies said.

“Bridget Hawthorn, age twenty-three, squib. And before you ask, squibs can see dementors.” Ferret said pointedly, “It was two weeks ago when me and Harry were taking a walk through London, the temperature dropped suddenly, I felt every bit of happiness drain out of me. It was afterward that I saw these creatures in tattered robes, the closer they got the worse the pain got until I passed out.”

“And we’re to trust that this is true?” The toad lady, as we’ll call her, speculated.

“I don’t lie, neither does my husband, or my adopted daughter. Nothing will change that.” Ferret answered stiffly.

“What makes me curious is why a student going into his fifth year can do a spell most full grown wizards cannot.” The Toad Lady said, making Wolf seem guilty for something.

“Third year the castle was surrounded by dementors, I also pass out when I’m near dementors, I learned the spell for protection. Although, I am curious as to why creatures controlled by the Ministry would attack me in London.” Wolf said, leading back to a thought that had preoccupied his mind while not preparing for the trial or Sable and Ferret’s casual wedding(it was a priest, the bride, groom, Vaughn and Wolf).

“Why, it seems as if you are insinuating this is the Ministry’s fault.” At this point Wolf was wishing he had some duct tape so he could stop Toad Lady from talking.

“No, that’s not what I’m insinuating. I’m thinking that the Ministry has lost control of the dementors to someone they don’t think exists.” Wolf said scathingly.

“There is no You-Know-Who. He is dead, gone, end of story.” Someone who had similar authority to Toad Lady said with a sense of finality. “That, however, is not the point of this trial. We shall vote now. Raise your hand if you think that Mr. Potter is guilty and should be expelled immediately.” About a third of the room raised their hands,

first being Toad Lady. Evil Git. The other two thirds wanted him innocent, charges were dropped instantly.

When they got back to Grimauld Place, Ferret immediately left after a quick goodbye to him and Vaughn, the two were leaving immediately. Sable had said his goodbyes the night before, apparently they were going to spend quite a bit of time in the Caribbean. The Weasleys were celebrating by chanting 'he got off', many patted him on the shoulder, Vaughn... clung to him like always after kissing his cheek. The night went quite well, except for the pain Harry's scar caused him that had been happening all summer.

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(A/N: This is my longest chapter, but I'm happy anyways. Sorry it's been so long, but I didn't have a laptop charger for five days, and then I was lazy... Anyway, that's the entire summer in one chapter. Next chapter, the torture of Toad Lady begins. Hopefully I can get it posted before the twenty-sixth, other wise I'll have to wait to post until September because I lose internet. Don't worry, in September I'll post like crazy! Please review! Lemonbomber out, yo!)

Wolf personally thought that traveling in such a large group was rather conspicuous, but the Order insisted that they have enough people to protect Wolf if Voldemort attacked. Molly Weasley had complained for the last several days that under current circumstances, Fudge wasn't about to let any member of the Order borrow Ministry cars. Wolf on the other hand preferred the twenty minute's walk to King's Cross, and Sirius had changed into his animagus form and was definitely enjoyed the walk. They as went through the barrier as inconspicuously as such a large group could. Before they got on the train they were told to be careful and to be stingy with information. Remus told Wolf and Vaughn not to get in trouble, they told him they couldn't promise anything. When they got on the train Ron and Hermione seemed a bit uneasy about something, and it came out when Wolf suggested they find a compartment, Hermione stumbled a bit on words, "Harry, me and Ron are kind of... Prefects... We're supposed to be in the Prefect's compartment."

"Oh..." Wolf looked a bit disappointed for a moment before looking happy for them, "Then you should go, me and Vaughn will be fine." Hermione and Ron weren't sure, but went anyway.

As Wolf and Vaughn walked away Vaughn looked at him knowingly, "You aren't happy that you weren't chosen."

"I'm not happy, but I'm not surprised either." Wolf admitted, "I've stunned or otherwise incapacitated far too many teachers to be considered a role model."

"You had a good reason to do all of that." Vaughn pointed out, "Ah, there's Neville, Luna and Ginny." It was quite an interesting ride, especially considering that Neville refused to go anywhere without his Mimbulus Mimbletonia, which he caused to coat the room in stinksap. Cho Chang stopped by to say hi to Wolf, apparently, Cedric hadn't quite been the same since the tournament, he and Cho had broken up before the year was out. Rumor was she was looking for a new boyfriend, Wolf rolled his eyes and Vaughn glared at Cho as if daring her to try to ask Wolf, if only to give her sufficient reason to hex the annoying Ravenclaw.

They met with Ron and Hermione at the horseless carriages and soon they were all sitting at the Gryffindor in the Great hall, although McGonagall did end up yelling at Luna who then went over to the Ravenclaw table. It was noticed that Professor Grubbly-Plank was back, and the new face at the staff table was, "You're kidding, it's Toad Lady..." Wolf Groaned.

"That's Toad Lady?" Vaughn asked, looking quite worried actually.

"Uh... Toad Lady? I think I missed something." Hermione said, Ron nodded, apparently he was thinking along the same lines as Hermione.

"That lady up there, who wears far too much pink and vaguely resembles a toad was at my trial." Wolf quickly explained, "She was all for getting me expelled."

"And she's our Defense teacher?" Ron said staring at her critically, "You might be right, the Defense teachers do have to hate you."

Hagrid made his way in, and minutes later the first years were led in and the sorting hat sang it's song that in short was a warning supporting house unity. As the first years were sorted Nearly-Headless Nick said it wasn't the first time the hat had given warnings, the last time was when Voldemort rose to power the first time. The following conversation about the hat knowing whether the school was in danger or not and Nick's 'noble blood' resulted in a very upset ghost leaving their part of the table. Hermione rolled her eyes, "Nice Ron."

"Wha'?" Ron asked, his mouth full like it had been through most of the conversation.

"Nothing, just close your mouth and eat." She told him, then muttered, "It's a good thing you're cute."

After the feast Dumbledore attempted to make his beginning of the year speech, but he didn't get farther than introducing Toad Lady and Professor Umbridge when she interrupted him with 'hem hem's. After



several interruptions she finally got her chance to speak. Vaughn leaned over and whispered in Wolf's ear, "What the hell does she think she's doing? I may not be overly fond of Dumbledore, but who would interrupt him? He's an old man for Merlin's sake."

"Apparently a toad wearing pink with a high pitched annoying voice." Wolf replied as the woman droned on. The entire room was bored before long, Wolf got the main gist of things before tuning out her voice and glaring at her. When she finished Ron looked confused, "Well that was about as fun as a jar of dirt."

"It was more than that Ronald." Hermione hissed, she and Wolf looked upset, Vaughn was looking as if she recognized something was wrong with Umbridge's speech, but couldn't place it.

Ron thought for a moment, "Nope, just dirt."

"The Ministry's interfering at Hogwarts, discouraging individualism and taking out what they don't like." Wolf interpreted.

"What?" Ron said, Hermione nodded, "This is officially the worst jar of dirt ever."

"Ron, we have to show the first years the common room." Hermione reminded him.

"Oh, right." Ron turned to where the first years were, "Hey, midgets! Come on!"

"Ronald!" Hermione yelled, the two were usually like this, constantly fighting. Vaughn and Wolf began making their way up to the common room. Because of early classes that day they separated and went to their own dorms. Wolf heard Seamus talking and didn't bother to listen until he heard his name.

"...Potter's a liar, Dumbledore gone senile... I guess if I were her I wouldn't want me here either." Seamus said.

Wolf's jaw tightened as he slipped into the room, "I suppose your mum reads the prophet." It was a statement, not a question.

"Yeah, and why are we supposed to believe what you said happened rather than the Prophet." Seamus argued.

"So you suppose I somehow kidnapped a colleague of mine that I had nothing against, and I was the one to crucio to somewhat insanity?"

"You killed a teacher, you've proven you're capable of doing that."

"Forget this, why don't you just leave me alone and read the prophet, because everything in it is true. Just like last year when it printed that story about me being able to dance the tango."

Neville laughed, "True, he blew that rumor out the window at the Yule Ball."

"Exactly, so you can't rely on the Prophet for the truth." Wolf growled.

"I don't want to share a dorm with you, you're a madman." Seamus yelled as Ron entered the room.

"Personally, I wouldn't call Harry the madman, seeing as it's you we can hear in the common room." Ron told him, his eyes narrowed in anger.

Seamus paled, "Don't tell me you believe the rubbish coming out of his mouth about You-Know-Who?"

"Yeah, I do. I thought we all knew that Harry is physically incapable of lying."

"I'm surrounded by madmen..." Seamus sighed in disgust.

“I think you should watch who you call a madman, remember I’m a prefect and not afraid to give you detention.” Seamus glared for a moment and got into bed, pulling his hangings around him. Ron looked at Neville and Dean, “Anyone else’s parents have an issue with Harry?”

Neville and Dean shook their heads, Neville said, “My Gran recognizes rubbish when she sees it, and she says that it’s all the Prophet is. We believe Harry.”

Wolf smiled feeling a rush of gratitude, he also felt that the room needed lightening up, “Neville, I didn’t know Trevor had a girlfriend.”

“What?” Neville said pulling a face of true confusion he usually wore in potions.

“We just saw her, she’s the new Defense teacher.” Wolf elaborated, the other three boys began laughing, only for it to get worse when Neville realized Trevor was missing. When they finally found Trevor (okay, George found him in a bag of potion ingredients in his trunk that hadn’t been opened since they were at Grimmauld place) Neville made a show of telling Trevor to stay away from ‘that nasty Umbridge woman’.

Tempus Praeter

It was the first class with Umbridge, and Wolf had a very bad feeling about the entire thing from the moment he saw the words ‘A Return to Basic Principles’ on the board and a smug smile on her face. The woman in pink frowned at the wands, “Wands away, quills out. We will be using a carefully structured, Ministry approved, theory based course in defensive magic that will bring you all up to O.W.L. testing levels. Please copy down the follow- Mr. Potter?” Umbridge called on him barely a second after the words appeared on the black board to copy.

“I was wondering why in your ‘goals’ for the class you don’t mention anything about using spells.” Wolf said with a purely curious tone to his voice.

“Oh dearie, I wouldn’t see a situation that could arise that would make it necessary to use a spell in my class seeing as we won’t be attacked.” Professor Umbridge said in a sickly sweet voice.

“You mean, we won’t use magic?” Ron asked.

“Raise your hand if you wish to speak... You must be a Weasley, no wonder...” Umbridge said turning her back on him only to be confronted by Hermione and Wolf’s hand in the air, she chose Hermione.

“Isn’t the whole point of the class to practice spells?”

“Are you a ministry-trained educational expert?” Umbridge replied.

“At least she isn’t a toad...” Wolf whispered, but Umbridge heard it.

“What was that Mr. Potter?” She asked.

“I said that teaching us theory won’t help us if we are attacked.” Umbridge tried to ignore him, but more than a few people turned the class into a debate room, all on Wolf’s side.

“Quiet!” Umbridge called, getting the class back in line before continuing quieter, “There will be no attacks during my class. I do not mean to criticize Dumbledore’s decisions as headmaster, but I must say you’re past teachers have been irresponsible and exposed you to dangerous situations and very dangerous half breeds.”

“Lupin was the best teacher we ever had and my parental guardian.” Wolf said in a protective growl, Umbridge ignored his comment.

“You’re past teachers have led you to believe that you will come to encounters with a dark wizard every day, which is-“

“Somewhat truthful.”

“Ms. Granger, hand! It has come to my knowledge your past professor actually performed illegal curses in front of-“

“He turned out to be some loony impersonating him.” Dean spat out.

“Mr. Thomas! I assure you, with theoretical knowledge you should be able to successfully get through your O.W.L.s.”

“What about real life? Are we supposed to be able to perform a brand new spell in the face of danger?” Wolf argued.

“There is no danger to fear from.”

“Then what would you call Voldemort, a kitten. He’s back and he will kill again.”

The room was silent for a few minutes, then Umbridge said, “Twenty points from Gryffindor. Now let me make this clear, you have been told that a certain dark wizard has returned from the dead, this is a lie-“

“It’s not a lie, Voldemort is back and just as dangerous as he was fifteen years ago.”

“Detention Mr. Potter!”

“So according to you, Cedric and I returned covered in blood last year for no reason? that we somehow got caught in a limbo for half an hour after touching the cup?”

Umbridge took a deep breath and wrote a quick note on a piece of parchment, “Mr. Potter, deliver this to Professor McGonagall, now.”

Tempus Praeter

“So how did things go with Professor McGonagall?” Hermione asked as they met Wolf in the dorm.

“Well,” He sighed, “We had a nice long chat about what happened in Defense, she asked for the details, I gave them to her, and she gave me a cookie.”

Ron and Hermione stared at him, and said in unison, “A cookie?”

“Oh, and told me I needed to keep my temper in her class, but I was mainly concerned with the cookie.” Wolf said, “and apparently she’s here on behalf of the minister, I think he’s afraid Dumbledore’s going to use us against him.”

“Yeah, right.”

Tempus Praeter

Wolf had been in his detention with Umbridge three days now, the first day he had completely annoyed the Toad Lady, often replacing ‘I will not tell lies’ with ‘I cannot tell lies’. It was a bit painful, but worth seeing the toad turn a nice vibrant shade of red. Vaughn had noticed yesterday(Wolf had used gauze and a ridiculous story to cover up what Umbridge was doing to him, but Vaughn saw through his story, put him in a full body bind and investigated what was really under the gauze) and rushed off to who knows where. Wolf didn’t think much of it until the next day when Umbridge cancelled his detention, saying she thought the message had sunk in. He looked at his hand, she wasn’t kidding. However he asked Vaughn if she’d mentioned it to McGonagall earlier, she smiled, “Nope.”

“Then why did she cancel my detention tonight?”

“We had a little chat yesterday, I believe my exact words were that if she used that bloody quill on anyone else I would personally ensure she is sent to Azkaban for use of such cruel and primitive punishments, since I wasn’t willing to let someone as insignificant as her be the reason I’m expelled. Isn’t studying law fun?”

“Whenever I forget how evil you are, you always remind me in the coolest ways.”

## Tempus Praeter

“This isn’t right.” Hermione complained, it was nearly December and although Umbridge’s precious blood quill hadn’t been seen, her classes weren’t improving, “We aren’t learning anything in her class.”

“Looks like she’s taking the slow route of killing you, just don’t give you the ability to protect yourself.” Ron snorted.

“Considering the experience we have, it’s the other students that need to worry.” Vaughn said, though they all knew that she was also against Umbridge.

“Perhaps we need an alternative teacher here for defense.” Hermione suggested, “Someone with experience, like a teacher.”

“Ha, you’ve seen her ‘evaluations’ of the teachers. She has too much power for any of them to think of betraying her.” Ron said, “Which means we need a teacher who isn’t part of the staff, with easy access to the school without looking suspicious, and believes Harry.”

Vaughn got a synical look on her face and looked at Wolf, “I wonder who would have those qualities.”

“Vaughn, I don’t remember volunteering.” Wolf said in a serious tone.

“So?” Vaughn asked.

“If he does it we have to tell a teacher.” Hermione said. “It’s a school rule.”

“Oh, come on, rules are important for other people to follow.” Vaughn chided, “We’re Gryffindors, rule-breaking is customary.”

“I don’t know...” Wolf said looking at his injured hands, if Umbridge found out, there was no telling what she would do to him and what all the ministry would continue to endorse her for.

Ron smiled, “Harry, just think of how much it would bother her to know we’re meeting in secret to practice Defense.”

Wolf thought for a few minutes, “I don’t know who all will listen to me, or be willing to let me teach them, but I’ll give it a shot. But we need to make this safe, like, safer than discussing this in the library.”

Alius Positus

“Remind me again, why the seven of us snuck out after curfew to meet in the Shrieking Shack?” Neville asked.

“Well, we figured that since we’ve decided to disregard one rule, let’s just blow them all out of the window at once.” Vaughn said cheerfully, Wolf rolled his eyes.

“We don’t want to be overheard, and this is about as safe as we can get.” Wolf answered, “Now, we need to find a smart way of choosing who to invite into this. Remember, this is a defense class that will act like a junior Order of the Phoenix. We need people who believe the cause and are loyal to the light, therefore, no death eaters.”

“Okay, there’s the twins, the Collins’s, the Parvatis, Lavender, most of the boys in Gryffindor, our entire Defense class.” Ron began the list, Hermione was acting as scribe, her wand was the light for the whole group, being placed in the middle of the circle.

“Justin and a few of the other Hufflepuffs he’s friends with are showing interest in some form of Defense class.” Neville reported.

“Cedric has said he wants to fight against Voldemort, Cho likes him again and will follow him, her two best friends want to spend more time with her and this would benefit them.” Luna said.



“Wolf, you aren’t going to like this,” Vaughn began, “I don’t trust the other Slytherins, but one of them has decided that he wants to be a double agent for us. He doesn’t want to join the dark lord, I know you two have a history, but at the beginning of term he asked for this. He wants-“

“Malfoy?” Wolf interrupted, the rest of the circle was frozen in shock, while Wolf looked indifferent. Vaughn nodded. Wolf sighed, “Add his name to the list, but I want to talk to him before anything happens. As for a headquarters, I vote the Room of Requirement.” The circle nodded in agreement, “Now, don’t tell anyone, that means parents, teachers, the Order, friends outside of this. The more people who know, the more people who can tell. Agreed?”

Tempus Praeter

Meet me in the trophy room, ten minutes after lunch starts. We need to talk.

The note was short, the handwriting unfamiliar, but Draco knew it was probably Pott- Harry. His parents would never approve of his loyalties, but after meeting the Dark Lord in person, he felt as if he didn’t have a choice. At lunch he easily snuck away from Crabbe and Goyle, they were making a beeline for the Great Hall, and Draco usually walked a little behind them so they would clear an easy to travel path. He was more than five minutes early, but there his ex-rival was, hopefully it would soon be an ally. Harry was staring at a plaque, a quidditch team award with James Potter as team captain and Chaser. Harry’s mouth barely moved as he spoke, “So you believe Voldemort has returned?”

Draco couldn’t hold back a snort, “Believe? I’ve seen him.”

“And?”

“He tortured my parents, muggles, killed for no reason. I know I’ve been cruel, but that’s... disgusting prejudice.”

“Like calling a muggleborn a mudblood.” Harry said in a calm voice, Draco couldn’t help but flinch. Vaughn had never forgiven him for that.

“I get you’re point, now why did you ask me here?”

“A friend of mine said something about you wanting to switch sides before getting on too far.”

“I don’t want to kill, and I don’t want to serve him.”

“Do you want to serve against him though?”

“Yes.” Draco got out after a minute of racing thoughts.

“You can’t do much for now, none of us can. Though we can train for when we can.”

“Are you talking about some sort of alternate Defense class?”

“For students, run by students, taught by me, and one hundred percent against the rules. Do you want in or not? If not, I will obliviate you without a second thought.”

“I want to do this, I don’t want to be a monster.”

Harry smiled, “Good answer, but if you prove unfaithful, my comment about obliterating you still stands.”

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(A/N: Well, time is growing short before I have to stop posting for the Summer, keep in mind, I still have ten days to post, if you’re lucky I can get in one more chapter. I love having Vaughn being threatening, I was writing that part and realized Vaughn was far too protective to let that happen to Wolf. I haven’t decided yet whether Draco’s going to be on the good side or bad side, I would be more than happy to hear from you guys/girls. I find it kind of sad that only six people out the four hundred and sixty-some people who read the chapter

reviewed. Good thing I only require five for an update... Please review!)

It was the day after the last Hogsmeade trip before Christmas, and many of the professors were confused as to why a large portion of their students were nowhere to be found. Most of the students didn't even notice because they were either engrossed in finishing the last of their homework or the giant snowball fight going on by the Lake. The missing students however, were in the room of requirement waiting for one of the four people at the front of the room to begin talking. Ginny, Neville and Luna had decided that they didn't want to be one of the people in charge, Hermione was writing down everyone's names in one column on a piece of parchment, Ron and Vaughn were having a whispered argument about the lone Slytherin in the room, and Wolf looked deceptively calm. The clock chimed one in the afternoon and Wolf stood to face the group, which was quite a bit bigger than he had expected, "I have decided to ask all of you here if you would like the opportunity for a more... practical class on defense against the dark arts."

The reaction was immediate, many gave complaints voiced overly loudly, such as the following:

"Is this allowed?"

"You're younger than half of us?"

"What happened in the tournament last year?"

"What is he doing here?"

The last was accompanied with a finger pointed at Draco, who stood several feet from the others, he had known he wouldn't be welcomed with open arms. Wolf rolled his eyes, "Okay, first of all, no this isn't allowed, the ministry doesn't want young minds armed with knowledge enough to create an army. Secondly, while quite a few of you are older than me, do any of you have much first hand experience with the dark arts? Outside of the classroom?" The room was silent, "Thirdly, we are here to practice the dark arts to protect ourselves, not discuss last years events. All I will say is that Voldemort was resurrected that night." This was met with several snorts of laughter.

“It’s true.” Cedric said, “I watched it all.” Cedric was shivering at the memory, the room seemed comforted in his faith in Wolf.

“As for Draco, although Slytherins are known for being dark, Draco will be working on our side, as a spy. There fore he will be training with us in secret and keep his loyalty.” Wolf shifted his gaze to Draco for his last sentence, “Or he shall suffer the consequences we discussed on a previous date in Private. Understood?” Draco nodded.

Vaughn had moved next to Wolf and took over talking for a minute, “The goal of this is to teach you things the ministry refuses to, this means that you will all be sworn to secrecy, to telling friends, family, teachers, random strangers, etc. Anyone who thinks that they will not be able to do this, raise your hand, you will obliterated at once and removed.” No one raised their hand.

“Now this is where it gets tricky,” Wolf said, “We want Umbridge and the ministry to know we’re doing something, just not what. I don’t think this will be too difficult, how can they miss some forty students-“

“Forty-seven.” Hermione cut in from her seat at the small table where both her and Ron were sitting, her with the parchment, him with a box.

“Right, forty-seven students randomly go missing for a couple hours two, maybe three days a week depending on what we can schedule.” Wolf corrected, “Now, what we’re going to have you do is sign this parchment next to your name. It’s enchanted so that we’ll know if someone rats us out, carries the darkmark, or is thinking of rebelling so we can try to eliminate the problem. After signing the parchment you will be handed one of these,” Wolf plucked something from the box Ron had, it was a small stone pendant on a black leather string, “These are amulets we will use to communicate, all of the designs vary, you can trade them, as long as everyone has one. On the back they have to engravings, one will remain the same ‘SeT’, the initials for the group, Seditio enim Tutamen. It’s latin, if you don’t know what it means, look it up. There is also a set of four numbers, read backwards it will be the date of the next meeting. When the date

changes, they will grow hot for about five minutes. Please make a nice orderly line.”

It seemed like the girls were more excited than the boys to get the jewelry, but the boys were happy to learn that that the cords could shrink to be worn as anklets and covered with socks. There was quite a bit of changing, mainly between girls who wanted a certain pattern. Vaughn and Hermione were looking quite proud of themselves for making the patterns, although it was Hermione that enchanted them. Vaughn made Wolf's, it was wolf shaped and a bit bigger than everyone else's, Wolf had already promised to wear it in plain site at all times, mainly for his own entertainment of having the thing that Umbridge wanted to know about so much would be flaunted about in her face. Few of the boys actually wore theirs in sight, in fact, it was just Wolf, Ron, Draco and Cedric, the rest hid theirs.

News about their gathering didn't take long to get around, the next morning Umbridge made a rule against any and all clubs, including quidditch. The SET, as they called it, took this as a chance to get more practices, although a few people worried that it was going to be disbanded. Umbridge got upset when the meetings continued. The SET was practicing expelliarmus, and during their third class even second years had mastered it. Umbridge began a group to help round up trouble-makers, she picked exclusively from Slytherin, Draco had been invited to join and did so in order to seem normal. Everything went normally until Hermione, Ron, Wolf and Vaughn were called to the Headmaster's office on Christmas Eve. They went without question though, and found Dumbledore, McGonagall, Umbridge and the three sets of parents(Sirius and Remus were now the legal guardians of both Wolf and Vaughn). All nine were standing.

Dumbledore motioned towards four chairs in the middle of the room, “Please take a seat.”

Hermione moved to obey, but Wolf put a hand on her shoulder to stop her, “We'd prefer to stand.”

Umbridge pursed her lips and the parents shifted uncomfortably. McGonagall took a deep breath before talking, “Let's cut to the chase, we have information suggesting that you four are leading an army.”

“And what would make you think something as strange as that?” Wolf asked, it had been agreed that Wolf and Vaughn were better at avoiding directly answering questions, so they would talk.

“A reliable source has been investigating and says you have begun training an army for Dumbledore.” Umbridge said grinning, “Dumbledore denies the claim, but I wanted to ask you in person.”

“An army?” Vaughn said incredulously, “We haven’t started an army, we’ve started a tutoring group where we meet in quiet parts of the castle on Tuesdays and Thursdays, we call ourselves SET. I’m aware of that, but we don’t know anything about an army.”

“B-but...” Stuttered Umbridge, Wolf was glad Draco had dropped this information off with Umbridge. It was an alibi that everyone but Umbridge believed.

“Sorry, we have nothing to do with an army for Dumbledore. We hate to disappoint you.” Wolf said. “May we go now?”

Umbridge glared at them for a moment before leaving the room in a huff. The remaining adults looked at them questioningly as if re-asking the question. None of the four so much as looked as if they were thinking of changing their answer. The parents then took a moment to really look at their children and immediately noticed something very unusual about them. Molly Weasley was first to say something, “Ronald Weasley, tell me you aren’t wearing a necklace.”

Ron pursed his lips and averted his eyes, his mother demanded him answer. He took a deep breath before talking, “I would love to tell you that it isn’t a necklace, but I refuse to lie.”

“They’re all wearing them.” Mrs. Granger said, she looked at her daughter’s necklace, it was a dove that Ron had made. After Vaughn made Wolf’s, Wolf had made hers, and Ron and Hermione ended up doing the same.

“What are they for?” Remus asked, Molly was still fuming at the dragon pendant around her son’s neck, mumbling something about how he was going to go crazy just like Charlie.

Vaughn blushed, “It was me and Hermione’s idea, most members of the SET wear them so the younger members know we’re willing to help. As we are the ones in charge, we feel it’s necessary to help.” She held hers out to show it was a rose, carved by the careful hand of her boyfriend.

Remus smiled when he saw Wolf’s was a wolf, the eyes had been painted a vibrant green. It was then that Wolf convulsed and paled before freezing into a statue, eyes open, limbs rigidly at his sides. The eleven other people in the room looked from one to another as if unsure as to what to do. Ron was the first to say anything, “...That was really weird.”

“Has he ever done anything even remotely like this before?” Dumbledore said checking to make sure Wolf was okay despite the fact Wolf couldn’t move.

“No,” Vaughn said, practically in a state of shock, who could blame her though. If wolf had been lying on the floor rather than standing he would look dead.

“What if someone cursed him?” Sirius said touching Wolf’s shoulder in a protective way. Unfortunately, it was at the exact time that Wolf slipped out of his trance and the small amount of pressure on his shoulder was enough to throw him off balance. Wolf was able to put his arms between his head and the corner in time to get a nasty cut on his left arm rather than his head. Wolf wasn’t worried about that though, or about the fact he had been in a trance, and when Vaughn asked if he was okay his answer was for from what they expected.

He shook his head wistfully and spoke in a voice that was a bit shaky, “It’s not me we should be worried about,” He looked at the three Weasleys in the room, “Please tell me Percy isn’t at the ministry.”



The expressions all around the room changed drastically, Molly was the most concerned of course, "I think he is, why do you ask? What's going on?" It was in a frenzied voice, all of this said in about half a second in one breath.

"I think he's been attacked in one of the lower halls, it looked kind of like one of the hall ways leading off from the level my trial was on this summer." Wolf hadn't calmed down, but his breathing was softer, and between Remus and Sirius(though he looked uneasy having Sirius touch him) they had gotten him into a chair.

Arther Weasley wasn't pleased, "The only other thing on that level is the department of mysteries, what was he attacked by?" Mr. Weasley already had his coat on, prepared to leave the second he was given the last piece of information he needed to make a legitimate claim at the ministry.

"A snake, venomous I think." Wolf had barely finished his sentence before Arther had flooded away. Molly was now in tears, and the others were looking to Dumbledore for what to do next.

"Mr. Weasley," Dumbledore began, looking at Ron, "Will you and Ms. Granger go collect your siblings and all of you should pack clothes, for Mr. Potter as well, and meet us in the hospital wing. Remus, Sirius, Harry should probably get his arm looked at, and I doubt you will be able to take him anywhere without Ms. Hawthorn. Mrs. Weasley, I think you should join them. Minerva, will you arrange a portkey to take them to Grimauld Place, they will stay there for the rest of the vacation." There was nodding around the room before people began scattering.

As Wolf struggled to stand Remus quickly moved his shoulder under Wolf's arm and his arm around Wolf's shoulders to steady him, which he seemed grateful. Remus sighed, "So you can see the future too."

Wolf flinched, "No, no, it's not that I saw the future... it's, it's... complicated." Wolf said, scrunching his brow before lifting his free hand to rest on his forehead.

“Your scar again?” Vaughn said as she held the door to the office open for him.

Sirius gave her a strange look, “What do you mean? He never said anything about his scar hurting before.”

“He didn’t say anything because he doesn’t trust you, well, he trusts Remus, but Remus would tell you and he didn’t want that.” Vaughn replied scathingly, “So is it Wolf?”

Wolf nodded, but he wasn’t showing them the true extent of his pain.

### Tempus Praeter

It was evening by the time everyone was ready to leave, or rather, when Madam Pomfrey saw me fit to leave the hospital wing. The cut on my arm was about six inches long and my elbow was torn up gloriously, it took her nearly half an hour to make it almost as good as new, it would be another two weeks before it would be in good condition again. Mrs. Weasley was storming around the house making dinner, using her cooking as a vent for her current stress. Her children, Bill had joined but Charlie was still in Romania, were sitting in the dining room, tension thick enough you would need a steak knife to cut through. Percy was the most picked on of them all, and the guilt was setting in. Arthur had taken the time to write them a note saying that Percy had been found and St. Mungo’s was doing what they could. Vaughn had snuck off to her room to get the extra homework assigned her over break done. As for Remus and my godfather, they were probably still looking for me. They won’t find me until I’m ready though, there’s certain advantages that come from being able to climb onto the roof.

They said I was in some sort of trance for about a minute, it seemed longer than that. I didn’t just see the snake bite Percy, I was the snake in a sense. I saw through it’s eyes that Percy was just ahead, heard through it’s ears as Voldemort talked to it, felt the cool ground as the snake slithered over it, and tasted the blood as the snake grabbed onto the flesh. I frown in disgust of myself, I had also felt the snake and Voldemort’s joy at doing such a thing, and for a moment, I

had enjoyed the taste. I was going to have to brush my teeth again to try to get the coppery taste out of my mouth, I had already tried six times, but another go wouldn't hurt. It was then that I pulled myself from that trance, away from Voldemort and his pet. No one's guilt could add up to mine, some small part of my head had me convinced that this was my fault.

I heard happy shouts of joy from below, and figured I might as well see what's going on. It took me a few minutes to scale down the building to the open window, and I hoped I looked better than I was feeling. My scar was a dull ache that stabbed like a knife at random intervals, they weren't going to know that. I was greeted with applause and a hug from Mrs. Weasley as she speedily said something about saving her baby. Apparently, if they had waited much longer there would only be six Weasley children. That made me feel marginally better until dinner, when they noticed...

"What's on your hand Harry?" Remus asked from across the table, I knew what he was talking about, but I would rather not talk about it at the moment.

I held up my left hand, "It's called a watch, it's used to tell time." I replied, a few people who were closer snickered, but Remus was far from amused.

"We both know I meant the other hand."

"It's nothing."

"You can't lie."

"That's the point, that fact nullifies the entire existence of it, therefore, it is nothing." I said, probably in an angrier tone than I should have.

The entire table was now staring at me, Remus blinked a few times, "What's that supposed to mean?"

That's when a few months of built up stressed just kind of... exploded, "It means that it's a scar that Umbridge gave me during the first week of school. It says that I must not tell lies, which I'm not capable of in the first place. I'm tired of so few people believing me about Voldemort, I'm tired of this stupid scar keeping me awake most nights, and I'm tired of knowing everything that goes in that sick mind of Voldemort's. I would very much appreciate being left alone, thank you very much."

The table was quiet for a few minutes, in which they heard his foot prints fade away up the stairs. Sirius had watched him leave with confused eyes, "What's wrong with him?"

Vaughn sighed, "It's a mix between Umbitch, I mean Umbridge, and what happened in the graveyard last year."

"Is she really that bad?" Remus asked, "You certainly didn't make her sound like a saint in your letter, but how bad can she be?" There was no shortage of answers.

"We call her the wicked witch of the west." Ginny offered first.

"She is only the second thing ever found that scares Peeves." Hermione said, thinking about the paintball accident and that Peeves hadn't been seen since.

"She's got the entire school repulsing the color pink." Vaughn said.

"The entire student body save about twenty Slytherins hate her." Fred added.

"And all of the teachers." George said.

"She's so evil she makes Snape look like a kitten." Ron finished, earning looks of surprise from around the table.

"Wow." Sirius piped in quietly, "That's pretty bad."

“That’s not the half of it, she usually has over a week of scheduled detentions at any given time,” Wolf had returned, much calmer than before, “I apologize for yelling, it was out of line.”

Remus shrugged it off, “It’s fine, I’d just like to know what happened at the graveyard to push you to being so stressed.”

Wolf bit his lip, as if he wasn’t sure if he really wanted to tell them, but decided to in the end, “Have you ever heard of Priori Incantem?”

“Yeah, it’s supposed to happen when wands with twin cores fire spells at each other.” Fred said to everyone’s surprise.

“What? Are you all really surprised that we actually know?” George said, “Besides, we’re studying it in charms.”

“Essentially, they’re right, the effects are different depending on the signatures of the wizards, the type of core, magical ability and so on.” Wolf began, “It always starts out the same, a cord of magic that connects the two wands, the users then have to have a struggle of will, I won the one between Voldemort and I. It began showing the, I guess you could call them ghosts, of the last people he killed, an old man and my parents...”

“You saw Lily and James?” Sirius asked.

Wolf nodded, “I pretty much messed a lot of things up by saving Cedric, it was only a few seconds until I had to break the connection in order to stay alive. My preference would have been able to talk to them longer... but I didn’t have much of a choice. I should probably tell you about the scar too, through it, I’m connected to Voldemort. It hurts when he feels a strong emotion, or when he is near me.”

Tempus Praeter

“He most certainly will NOT!” Vaughn said, her influence from Sable flaring up like an explosive midday on Christmas.

“Ms. Hawthorn, I assure you, Professor Snape will be a marvelous Occlumency teacher for Harry.” Dumbledore insisted.

“You might as tie a bow on him and give him to Voldemort for Christmas!” She argued.

Wolf rolled his eyes from his position behind Vaughn, and thanked Merlin that though his other friends were opposed, they weren’t vocal about it. He put a hand on her shoulder and leaned close to her ears and whispered so only she could hear, “Don’t worry, I’ve been trying to practice on my own and if I’m close enough I can backfire on him. Besides, I think if necessary we could take him out.”

Vaughn relaxed marginally as he moved back, only enough so that Wolf could tell, she fixed her best death glare on Snape, “I’m watching you.” She said in a threatening voice and walked away, well started to before she stopped in the doorway, “Another life shall be taken before the summer comes.” She turned to see them all watching her, “What?”

“You had another prophecy.” Wolf answered.

“Was it morbid?”

“You said someone’s going to die before summer.”

Vaughn scowled and looked up to what she surely thought was a deity and said, “Is it too much to ask for a happy prophecy once in a while?”

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(A/N: Okay, last chapter before summer, when I return to update again in September I’ll probably update the minute I have five reviews. I might be able to write more, but I don’t want to risk not doing the crap load of homework I have, such as the six hours of homework I had yesterday. Well, so long, farewell, auf weidersehen adieu(wow, that looks weird spelled out), Lemonbomber’s out for Summer!)

After yelling on Christmas Wolf was quiet, usually found in the library studying some sort of ancient defense book he found tak

After yelling on Christmas Wolf was quiet, usually found in the library studying some sort of ancient defense book he found taking extremely cryptic notes no one but him could understand. In fact, the only time he wasn't in the library or secretly on the roof was at dinner and his first Occlumency lesson, an hour long visit to hell in his opinion. Soon after the fifty or so necklaces of the SET grew warm and the date on the back changed to January third, they night they would return to Hogwarts. Wolf's only explanation was that he needed something to look forward to, and the night after he had an Occlumancy lesson.

Vaughn had managed to send a lengthy letter to Sable and Ferret via owl that returned the day before they returned to school. So far they had encountered no trouble, but felt that their being so close to Wolf's enemies didn't seem logical. Wolf didn't look happy about it, but agreed. It was still obvious he felt guilty about Percy, even though Percy was perfectly fine. It had been an interesting visit to the hospital considering that Lockhart had escaped, Wolf let his troublesome side show, he convinced a man who was not in the right of mind that all vampires had red hair and freckles... then the entire Weasley family left the room connecting to the hall where Wolf and Lockhart were talking. Lockhart went insane running around in circles, the nurses had to sedate him, Wolf just smiled and said that terrorizing stupid defense teachers never got old. Remus was grateful that Wolf didn't consider him a stupid Defense teacher.

They were now on platform nine and three quarters with the other students that had gone home for the vacation, Draco Malfoy being one of them. His parents had already left, ten minutes before the train left, he walked over to the group smirking, eyes trained on Wolf, "Well Potter, I never thought I'd see the day where you got into remedial potions before Longbottom did. Though I guess that Snape gave up on him long ago."

Remedial Potions, what the order had decided they would call Wolf's Occlumency lessons, but Wolf knew that that had nothing to do with

the conversation. Wolf shared a knowing smirk, "It's better than being a ferret, a bouncing ferret if I remember correctly?"

Draco's eyes darkened, although Imposter-eye was evil, he did do some wonderful things, like open a whole new realm of jokes to use on Malfoy, the amazing bouncing ferret. It was obvious Draco had no response, usually they rehearsed when they were going to pass around information so they looked like they hated each other, Draco scowled and pushed Wolf out of his way, "Out of my way Potter, I don't have time for the likes of you."

Wolf exhaled loudly through his nose, did Draco have to walk through the group of some fifteen people after pushing him on the shoulder. Really, he should have known it would have been easier to use his other shoulder, then he wouldn't have had to go past any of them. "Uh... Harry? This seems a bit pathetic for Malfoy." Wolf sighed and grabbed the palm sized piece of paper from his shoulder emblazoned with the words 'kick me' on it. Really, Draco needed help coming up with these things, Wolf's personal favorite was the time that Draco had bumped into him sending his school stuff all over the floor, mixing his note with the rest of the papers, right in front of Umbridge's face.

"He must be running out of ideas." Wolf said rolling his eyes, "He's been at this for five years now."

The goodbye was quick, and Wolf was truthfully glad about that. He wanted to know just what kind of hell was going on Hogwarts that Draco felt couldn't be said allowed on the train. When the train began to move Wolf took out the 'kick me' sign he had put in his pocket and his wand, he pointed at the parchment and whispered "Ostendo." The black pen on the page, which Wolf noted looked suspiciously like Sharpie, faded and was replaced with a few sentences, also written in what looked like Sharpie. Which brings the question of, why in the name of all that is magical do the Malfoys have a Sharpie? Wolf shook the thought from his head and laid it down where all five of them(Wolf, Vaughn, Hermione, Ron and Ginny) could read it.

SET,



I tell you with regret that Umbridge is not pleased with actions during Christmas Eve, whatever those actions were. She has banned the SET and any group larger than three to gather at any given time outside of class or meals. For defending you and attempting to break away from the control of the Ministry, Dumbledore has been 'temporarily released from his duties'. In Azkaban. Umbridge has taken over.

D.M.

"How does he know this stuff? He hasn't even been at Hogwarts." Ron shook his head in disgust.

"I can think of a certain governor of the school board who would rejoice at this information and tell his son." Wolf said reminding them all of Lucius Malfoy.

"Well, let's see who's brave enough to join us tonight as we take blatantly disregarding to a whole new level." Vaughn said somewhat optimistically, though all of them were aware that many might not come tonight.

Tempus Praeter

It was five minutes to eight, the prearranged time of every SET meeting and every Gryffindor, three quarters of the Ravenclaws, half the Hufflepuffs and Draco had all arrived. This came as no real surprise, those who planned to deviate from the path of SET had already been revealed by the parchment they signed at the beginning, and they had been obliterated as soon as the option to had arrived. Every one was upset by the new rule, and clearly glad to disregard the rule in order to learn Defense. Wolf looked at them, "Seditio eram Tutamen, is roughly translated into Rebelling for Defense. Now that the stakes are a bit higher, we are rebelling against more than just our current Defense classes. We are rebelling school rules, the ministry, some of us our parents' ideals, or the general decisions of your house. Therefore, I applaud all of you for coming. I will remind you that those who are thinking of leaving us will be obliterated and you will remember none of this. Those who have already left us

remember nothing, but the spells we practiced will come easier to them. I understand that this has a lot of you a bit upset, so today we will just be dueling.”

There were rules added to the dueling to keep everyone safe, but it was still enough to cause their aggression to cause several nasty burns and a few bruises that were easily healed despite the best healers were mediocre at best. Many, including the older Ravenclaws a few Hufflepuffs and Hermione, had learned to heal so that they didn't draw the suspicion from going to the Hospital Wing. At nine thirty they all said goodbye and snuck out in twos and threes heading in different directions, the last few groups had to be Gryffindors because of the ten o' clock curfew, but as always, no one was caught.

### Tempus Praeter

I silently cursed him for planning my Occlumency lessons at the same times that SET meetings were at three times a week(Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday). Just another complication for planning SET meetings, perhaps I could suggest Saturday morning meetings in order to get more time? Everyone agrees it feels like something is going to happen, okay, Vaughn says something bad will happen and no one is going to argue with someone who can tell the future. I really wish she didn't have to deal with all these stupid prophecies, between her carrying the burden of them and my mental issues due to abuse and attracting trouble like a gazelle locked in a room with hungry lions. Wow, that was a rather macabre simile. Okay, it's exactly eight and I'm at the door to Snape's office... let's wait a couple minutes just to get on his nerves. Besides, he says I need to 'clear my mind'. Eh, screw it, I knock.

“Enter.” His voice says sternly, apparently one minute was enough to get on his nerves, good to know. I go in and he motions for me to sit in a chair, just like last time. He asks if I'm ready I nod even though the answer is a lie, but he can see through it. Snape doesn't give a rat's ass and moves on anyway. He points his wand at me and says that horrible incantation, but it's not the word I loathe, it's what it does that makes my skin crawl. I feel his magic in my brain hurting similarly to when my scar hurts, and as hateful as the Imperius curse, but harder to throw. The Imperius is like light, it reflects off everything, but

this is like... gum. You can't reflect gum, you have to try to pry it off, but it absorbs part of your brain like a leech. Apparently it takes an unusual amount of magical consciousness to feel the spell, I could care less. I wish I couldn't. I could see memories pass through my vision, going earlier and earlier into my life. When it got to before Hogwarts my anger kicked in (no one needs to see what the Dursleys did to me) and it was like the gum spontaneously combusted, it was suddenly gone.

I looked up at the professor, not quite sure of what I had just done. Apparently he had a similar question, but just glared, "What did you do?"

"How am I supposed to know? You're supposed to be the teacher!" I shoot back, honestly, am I supposed to know everything?

"You haven't blocked off your mind, only a part of it that canceled the legilimency the second it hit it." Snape growled, "In other words, you are already using Occlumency. You need to learn to use that barrier to guard your entire mind."

"Let me guess, you won't tell me how to do that either?" I shot back sarcastically, his explanation of Occlumency was, and I quote, 'don't let me into your mind'. Oh, that was the best explanation ever! Not.

"Just take what feelings you have that are protecting those memories and expand them over your entire mind." I silently applauded Snape for actually explaining something. Now I just have to decide that I don't want anyone to see the horror that is my mind... wait, I don't want anyone to see my thoughts. Well, that was easy. "Ready for another go, Mr. Potter?"

I nodded for sure this time, but I failed, my happier memories were hard to block. I grimaced as Snape saw my happiest memories from the vague one about my parents, the recent one about my parents, asking Vaughn to the Ball, but he didn't see anything about SET thankfully. He gave a bittersweet comment at the end of class that I'm still not sure how I should have taken it, "Mr. Potter, I am forced to

admit that you are far less pathetic than I thought any children of James Potter could have been.”

“Uh... Thanks, I think.” I ended up saying before leaving in somewhat of a rush.

Tempus Praeter

“So how did it go?” Vuaghn asked as she was working on an essay for (ugh) Umbridge.

“I’m not sure,” Wolf said, “I was able to block off most of my mind, but I think he dismissed me by complimenting me and insulting my father at the same time.”

“Could have been worse,” Vaughn pointed out, “At least he didn’t call Sirius you ‘dogfather’ or a mutt too.”

“Oh, he was probably considering it.” Wolf admitted as he picked up his own Defense homework that he probably should have done over break, he glared at the advanced theory of stunning spells, something they had one over third year.

“You have defense tomorrow, right?”

“Yeah, is something wrong?”

“She knows that we’re continuing SET, I have a feeling that tomorrow won’t exactly be picnic for you.” Vaughn said, “She looked particularly livid this morning, and that was before me, Ginny and Luna began bugging her about her information on werewolves. She made them out to be fierce and angry creatures at all times. She gave more than half the class extra homework of copying the chapter from the book and writing a three foot essay about why all werewolves should be killed because we stood up for Remus.”

“What?” Wolf said, thinking of Remus.

“Don’t worry, we’re all refusing to do the assignment no matter what the punishment is, although the Ravenclaws are pouting about not being able to do the assignment.” Vaughn assured him, “However we do have this wonderful essay on recognizing werewolves that I could pretty much write in my sleep.”

### Tempus Praeter

The next few months the SET meetings had random people missing due to detentions, usually because they refused to complete one of Umbridge’s essays as punishment. However, none of the members wavered. In fact, during the O.W.L.s, the twins decided that they had had enough of the old toad and left with a colorful fireworks display to go to their joke shop in Diagon Alley. Thankfully they gave the SET enough warning that they could sing a wonderful song as the twins took off to the tune of ‘London Bridge is falling down’:

Old Dumbridge is going down,

going down, going down,

Old Dumbridge is going down,

and everyone’s happy,

Sure, it wasn’t the best of lyrics, but they didn’t have much time to prepare. They were rewarded with detentions and Dumbridge’s face turning this pretty purple color. As for Wolf’s progress in Occlumency, he could successfully repel or reverse any legilemency spell, unfortunately his scar made it impossible to completely block out Voldemort. When Voldemort was happy about what he was doing there was nothing Wolf could do except close his eyes and hope to get some information. By now Wolf had occasionally figured out how to get in Voldemort’s mind and had attended enough deatheater meetings to name all of the deatheaters. All Wolf was sure of at this point was that in a few weeks, in late May, that Voldemort was planning to break into the Ministry, but without when and how the information was useless.

“Wolf, can I talk to you?” Vaughn said, breaking Wolf away from his homework simply by the distressed tone in her voice.

“What’s wrong?” Wolf said, it looked like Vaughn was about to cry.

“Astronomy Tower, ten minutes.” Vaughn choked out before hastily leaving the common room, Wolf followed immediately, not caring that it was after curfew and he would probably get caught. When he finally reached the top of the Astronomy Tower Vaughn was curled up against the railing in their usual spot, when either of them was upset both would go up here to calm each other down.

“What’s so important that the common room isn’t safe enough to talk about it?” Wolf said as he sat by her side and wrapped an arm around her shoulder for comfort.

“I had another vision.” Was Vaughn’s short reply.

“Let me guess, it was morbid and possibly very important.”

“It was an elaboration of my last prophecy, I saw him die.”

“Tell me about it, maybe we can save him like we saved Cedric.”

If Vaughn hadn’t been so distressed by her vision, she would have smiled to know that she was saving lives with her gift, “It’s Sirius that’s going to die, I assume that it’s in the Ministry, but I’ve never seen the room before. There was a lot of people from the Order there fighting deatheaters, and in the middle of the room there was a very tall arch with a veil over it, the room was circular with nothing else in it. I believe the battle came in through the one door in the room, though I don’t know what’s on the other side. You and Sirius were battling Bellatrix and Lucious Malfoy by the veil, Malfoy hit Sirius with a spell, since it was in black and white for some reason I couldn’t tell what spell it was. Anyway, Sirius fell through the veil and was gone even though he should have gone on the other side and still be seen but he was just... gone.”

“Shh...” Wolf chided softly as tears ran down her face, he brushed them away softly, “It’s okay, I’m going to be right next to him, I’ll save his life.”

“So why are we going to be in the Ministry?” Vaughn asked, comforted by his promise.

“I’m not sure yet, ow.” The last part was accompanied by Wolf clutching his scar in pain, “Looks like I’ve been invited to another deatheater meeting, you mind?”

“Go ahead, I’ll keep watch,” Vaughn urged him as she opened the Marauder’s map. Wolf closed his eyes and let himself see through Nagini’s eyes, by looking through her eyes instead of Voldemort’s it was easier to figure out what Voldemort was talking about because the man talked with his hands.

“Dolohov, how is the planning at the Ministry going?” Voldemort tasked, his voice like ice sliding down your spine.

“My lord, on the twenty-first all of the guards in the department of mysteries are either serving you or being imperiused to. The situation is under control and ready for our plan.”

“Good, Snape, is your end prepared for our plan?” Voldemort’s focus rested on the rather bat-like potions master.

“Yes master, I have watch over the hall that night and I will ensure that he gets out that night, as long as that Umbridge woman doesn’t mess anything up, though I am sure that she will have no control of Potter and his friends.” Snape replied in the same monotonous voice he used at every deatheater meeting. The way that Snape replied made it questionable that Snape was really a deatheater when you compared him to the other deatheaters, but for all Wolf knew he may need to be admitted to a mental institution.

“Yes, that Umbridge woman is meddlesome, however, she did get Dumbledore out of my way. Lucius, since you are in charge of this mission, do you have any questions that could help you fulfill your

orders?" Wow, is Voldemort actually offering help to his death eaters? They get more help than students get with potions.

"I am just curious as to how you plan to get Potter to willingly go to the Ministry, my lord." Lucius said in a tone that showed nothing less than total devotion. What would Lucius do if he found out that his son is a spy?

"I don't believe you need to know more than the fact that I will use a close friend of his to bait him, but you need not concern yourselves with that. I shall take care of that." There was a sinister look on Voldemort's face, as if he might as well be walking towards you grinning while holding a dagger murderously. It was then that Wolf was pulled from the meeting.

"Hey Wolf, could you give me a hand with these two?" Vaughn said from a few feet away. Cedric and Cho were lying on the ground as if they had been stunned, and there was a blanket leaning against the wall. Vaughn was standing over their bodies as if she was trying to get them on the blanket, Wolf rolled his eyes.

"Mobilicorpus," He whispered while pointing his wand at Cedric, the body lifted and he set it in a sitting position on the blanket, Cho then floated down next to him. Wolf watched mildly amused as Vaughn tried to put Cedric's arm around Cho's shoulder in a comfortable position, "Let me guess, you didn't notice they were coming until they were here and your first instinct was to stun them, and this is your attempt to cover it up."

"Pretty much, so how did the meeting go?" Vaughn asked as she abandoned her attempts.

"We're going to the ministry on the twenty-first, and Voldemort's going to lure me there with someone I care about, but I don't know who." Wolf leaned down and grabbed the Marauder's map and checked it, "And Snape is going to be nice enough to let us go to our eminent doom."



“Aww, how nice of him.” Vaughn replied dryly as they descended from the tower.

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(A/N: I'M BACK!! Like always, review, even if just to say welcome back, or yell at me for being gone. The parody of 'London Bridge is falling down' was written by Aisling13, and she would have killed me if I didn't give her credit for that. Once I have five reviews I will post the next chapter in line. ...Wow, this is a short Author's Note...)

He stood straighter than usual, his green eyes flicked to his watch twice as often, his accuracy was off by an inch or two, he hadn't eaten this morning no matter how much Hermione and Vaughn bugged him about him, but other than those few small things it was impossible to tell that Wolf was nervous beyond belief. It was the twenty-first, the day Voldemort would use someone to lure him to the Department of Mysteries for some unknown reason and the day of a Saturday meeting of the SET. His anxiety was doubled when a house elf was sent to retrieve Draco, the house elves were avid supporters of SET, well, they were supporters of anything against Umbridge. All movement in the room dwindled to a stop as a green origami swan flew into the room, it was Draco's warning of something bad that he couldn't tell them in person for fear of exposing his position as spy. Wolf sighed heavily as he unfolded the crane, feeling the eyes of every member of the SET on him, the message was simple: She knows, we're coming. Please be ready.

Wolf had known that this day would come eventually, no matter how they tried to keep it a secret, someone had told. He glanced on the parchment that had been attached to the wall, one name stood out from the rest, Cho Chang. The realization hit everyone else as well. Before panic could set in Wolf began giving orders he had planned to give in such an occasion, "I know this is rushed, but we need to do this right, use disillusionment charms to make yourselves invisible and circle the room, Cedric, I'd like you by the door with me since we need to close them in here. When I take off my charm, everyone else follow suit. We don't have much time, so for Merlin's sake don't stand around idiots."

Everyone hurried to their positions while Wolf added the final part, on a table the Room of Requirement provided in the middle of the room Wolf dropped a note before taking his spot at the door Cedric wasn't at. Now they had to wait, but it was less than a minute before the doors were opened slowly. Umbridge and her legion of followers looked at the seemingly empty room suspiciously before spotting the note and crowding over to it, Draco making sure he was one of the more zealous followers. Umbridge looked confused when she read the note, "The joke is on you? I thought that girl said that they would be here!"

That's when Wolf and Cedric slammed the double doors closed, instantly catching the attention of the group of Slytherins. The looks on their faces were a priceless mixture of confusion and fear. Wolf smiled as he took off his disillusionment charm, "Don't worry, we're here." Umbridge was closest to Wolf as each member of the SET revealed themselves, wands pointing at their outnumbered captives, Wolf's pointing at Umbridge. "And the joke is on you, you came here to ambush us, and somehow I don't think we're the ones captured." Wolf felt his scar prickle, a sure sign that Voldemort had decided that now was the time that Wolf know who he had to go save. He quickly sent a stunner at Umbridge, everyone sent a stunner at their intended target. Except Vaughn, who sent a leg locker curse at Draco. While everyone else was tying up the victims Vaughn was apologizing that she had to stun him to keep his spy status a secret, Draco nodded glumly before she stunned him right between the eyes.

"Wolf is he...?" Vaughn asked Wolf, Hermione and Ron stood close because they understood what was going on, Luna and Neville were just listening in because it sounded important.

Wolf nodded before allowing the vision to enter his mind, it was the same dark corridor of the Department of Mysteries Voldemort always showed him, with the addition of someone writhing in pain- Wolf's eyes snapped open and he quietly breathed, "Remus... he's being tortured."

The effect was immediate to the five people that heard it, the rest of the SET was celebrating Dumbledore's downfall. They all decided that they should leave immediately, but were stopped by Hermione saying, "How exactly do we plan to get to London?"

This stopped them all mid step as they realized they hadn't gotten that far in planning yet, though they had messed around with some fairly ridiculous ideas, one of which included riding unicorns through muggle London. This is when another of their marvelous brainstorming sessions began, they went with the theory of starting at ridiculous and working back to plausible. Luna began, as always, "We could ride thestrals."

"Luna, you and Neville are the only ones that can see them, and Hermione hates flying." Ron argued.

"We could try apparating from Hogsmeade." Vaughn offered.

"Yeah, and splinch ourselves, followed by being expelled." Hermione scoffed.

"We could-" Neville began before interrupting himself, "But those only grow in subtropics south of the equator."

"Perhaps if we ask really nicely, Snape will take us there." Ron suggested, receiving glares from everyone and an exasperated roll of the eyes from Wolf.

"You people make everything far too complicated." Wolf sighed, "Why don't we just use the floo in her office?"

It was silent for a second before they all quickly agreed, Ron claiming he was just about to suggest that. They all began descending down stairs and got to her office to find it locked, and alohamora didn't work. Vaughn pulled a bobby pin out of her air and kneeled by the lock informing them all that they didn't want to know where she had learned to do this. That's when a certain double agent/potions master decided to give them all a heart attack, "I do hope you know that she might catch you."

Wolf was personally surprised that Snape was actually acting on their side, so decided to get a truthful answer instead of silence, "She's been taken care of, she's currently tied up behind locked doors elsewhere."

There was a sharp click and the door opened, Vaughn, who was oblivious to Snape's presence said, "All of you teachers are the same, never think to lock your doors against muggle means." That's when she saw Snape, "You didn't hear that."

"I don't hear or see anything." Snape said before walking away with a vampire like grace, obviously with no intent to tell anyone what had just happened.

"Three questions." Ron said, "Who is he, what did he do with Snape, and can we keep him?"

The six quickly entered the office, Wolf went first, followed by Vaughn, Ron, Hermione, Neville, and Luna locked Umbridge's door before following the other five. As expected there was floo powder on the mantel above the fireplace and a fire burning, which was strange because it was far from being cold now that it was practically Summer. They flooed to the ministry in the same order, brushing the soot off their clothes as they appeared in the wide entry to the Ministry with the fountain in the center. Wolf gave a dismal grin, "Now that we're here, we just have to break into the Department of Mysteries, save Remus, and somehow incapacitate anyone who tries to get in the way."

There was the clattering of many heavy objects falling to the floor and six wands pointed to the source. It was a squirrely boy that couldn't be much older than them, he had dark eyes and black hair that was a little long to call neat. He had dropped most of the stack of books he had in his arms, and upon seeing the wands put his hands in the air, dropping the two remaining books in the process. His voice cracked as he spoke, "I surrender! I'll give you whatever you want!"

The group looked among themselves before Wolf shrugged and Hermione asked, "You wouldn't happen to know where the Department of Mysteries is?" The silent agreement was to ask for information, then stun him so he couldn't tell anyone.

The boy seemed to be searching his brain in a panic, "Tenth floor, immediate left, last door on the left- no right! And that should be it, or the department of Exotic Meats."

"What's your name?" Nedville asked.

"Benjamin Jax the second, but you can call me Jax, or anything you want to call me." He spat out quickly, ever wary of the wands.

“Well, Jax, I'm sorry to say we can't leave you here conscious, we can't afford to be ratted out.” Neville replied sincerely.

Jax seemed to relax when Neville said conscious rather than alive, and he nodded, “That's understandable, I knew I never should have taken this job, this whole place has gone crazy.” Neville quickly stunned the boy and they headed for the elevators, pushing the level ten button while wondering why exactly the Ministry needed an Exotic Meats Department. What was this, a grocery store?

As soon as they got to the tenth floor, Wolf began walking toward the end of the hall on the left fast, arriving at the last door on the right long before anyone else and flung the door open. The door hadn't even opened all the way when Wolf slammed it shut again and took a few steps back as if expecting the door to open again. His companions looked at him curiously before he replied panting, “Apparently they like to keep their exotic meat fresh, and dangerous. Very dangerous.”

They looked to the door on the left that led into another room, with five other black doors they were hardly able to see because everything in the room was black, lit with a candle floating between each door. Instinctively, everyone looked at Wolf, his eyes were closed as if remembering something deep in his mind. It was soon he began to speak, “Behind one of these doors is a room that sparkles, or glitters. That's the one we want to go through.”

They looked around the room, which was now rotating so they couldn't even tell which door they had come from anymore, Ron asked, “And how do you suppose that we find that door?” Wolf shrugged.

“I have an idea!” Vaughn said and pointed to doors in sequence, “Eeney, meeney, miney, mo! Let's try that one.” She was pointing to the door to the immediate left of what they thought was the door they came through.

Wolf contemplated it for a second as Vaughn followed the door, "Okay, Vaughn keep your finger on that door as it goes around, we'll try this one, if it isn't it, we move one to the left. Agreed?"

Everyone nodded and Wolf opened the first door, but this one was closed before anyone else saw what was beyond it. Wolf looked a little shaken, "Another door to the Exotic Meats Department."

"My turn." Ron said moving to the next door to the left, ducking under Vaughn's outstretched arm. He opened the door a crack in fear that it would lead to something like the Exotic Meats Department, and his jaw practically fell to the floor.

"What is it, Ron?" Luna asked, though she was watching Vaughn with detached interest.

"It's a beach..." Ron began after gaining his ability to speak again, "With a mermaid... She's sooo pretty." Ron drawled out in a dreamy voice.

It took less than a second for Hermione to slam the door shut and slap Ron hard enough to leave a nasty red mark across his left cheek. Ron sullenly apologized to Hermione, saying she was much prettier than any mermaid could ever be. Hermione just glared at him, "Let's move on, shall we?" She said moving to the next door, opening it wide.

Through this door, there was glittering light, just as Wolf had said. The source of the glittering was a soft light reflecting off thousands of clocks, ticking loud enough you would think there were enough bombs to blow the entire Ministry back to the Stone Age. Wolf smiled and ignored everything, moving straight through the room to the door on the far side with confidence, the others following. The door opened at his slightest touch, revealing a room full of shelves with small shimmering orbs, the closest row with a fifty-four on it.

Wolf shook his head, "This way, it's at row ninety-seven."

"How do remember stuff like that?" Ron asked.

Wolf rolled his eyes and said pointedly, "Because I have half a brain."

"Hey!" Ron said, not missing the insult.

Wolf wasn't paying attention though, the anxiety he'd been holding in all day was showing as he counted the aisles, always a few ahead of everyone else. He stopped dead in his tracks as he reached the ninety-seventh. It didn't take them long to figure out what had stopped him, Remus was supposedly being tortured here from what Wolf had seen. There was no one here, not Remus, not Voldemort, just them. They checked a few in either direction, still nothing. Wolf's face was expressionless, "That bastard lured me here with nothing. Remus is probably perfectly safe at home with no idea about what's going on here. I have a really bad feeling about this."

"Same, and I would like to take back my earlier comment." Ron said, "It's still Snape, he wants us to die, and I don't want to keep him."

"Should we try to leave?" Hermione asked, "I know we came into this knowing it was a trap and all, but we've got to draw a line somewhere."

"Too late, they'll have gotten to us by then." Vaughn said trance like. Another stupid prophecy.

"Harry, what are these spheres?" Luna asked, eyes focused on one of them.

"How should I know?" Wolf said, a bit louder than was probably necessary.

"It has your name on it." She pointed to a little gold plaque that read 'S.P.T. To A.P.W.B.D. Dark Lord and (?) Harry Potter June 18, 1980'. They all stared at it, not sure what to make of it. Wolf scowled.

"It's a prophecy." He said angrily, "Made by Sibyl Trelawny to Albus Dumbledore. This for some reason is why I was lured here, and I was



stupid enough to fall for it.” He picked it up and wiped the dust off to see what he had pained himself to get for an unknown reason.

“Very stupid of you Potter, now all of you, kindly drop your wands and turn around slowly.” Lucius Malfoy drawled through a grin.

The other five obeyed and turned and dropped their wands immediately, sensing that they were surrounded, Wolf turned, but kept his wand and the prophecy in his hands. Lucius was not amused, “Drop your wand, Potter.”

Wolf snorted, “He sent fifteen of you to deal with six kids? Voldemort must not think much of you.”

“I told you to drop your wand.”

“And I suggest that you don't demand things unless you want to tell Voldemort that I broke this.” Wolf shot back, Lucius pursed his lips, but said nothing, “That's what I thought, now pick up your wands. If any of you death eaters try something, I'm not afraid to break this. It means nothing to me.”

Five Minutes Later

“What were you saying Mr. Potter?” Lucius said smiling evilly. Four deatheaters had been taken out, but that didn't matter because Hermione, Neville and Vaughn had wands to their throats, Ron was currently a parakeet, and Luna had injured her leg and couldn't walk. Oh, and did I mention Wolf was surrounded by the remaining six deatheaters without his wand. It was a hectic five minutes.

“I think we could come to an agreement on this.” Wolf said, just trying to buy time, someone had to come down here eventually.

“Okay, you give me the prophecy, I take you and your friends hostage.”

“As comforting as that sounds, I want me and my friends to walk out of here safely and without being hostages.”

“We'll see.”

“How about I break the prophecy, me and my friends walk out on our own, and we won't use the information we have on you to get you taken straight to the dementors.”

“Blackmail? That's child's play, let's be serious about this.”

“ I believe that's my job.” A voice growled, not too far behind the other death eaters. It was Sirius of course, but the frown on his face was so deep people might mistake him for an actual murderer, and Remus made Sirius look happy. And the rest of the Order that stood behind them didn't look too happy either.

“Accio.” Wolf's soft growl broke the silence and his wand flew to his hand surprising most present with wandless magic. In less than a second the man holding Vaughn had been stunned between the eyes. As trouble threatened, more death eaters appeared to match the number of Order members.

Ten Minutes Later

The fight had moved to a circular room, where a large arch stood in the middle, the one that Sirius was fated to die in. Ron was no longer a bird, he and Hermione were taking on three death eaters. Neville had taken Luna from the fight, concerned about her leg. Vaughn was taking on two death eaters, and appeared to be winning. Wolf and Sirius were fighting Bellatrix and Lucius, all of them full of anger. Sirius and Bellatrix hated each other the way only family could, Sirius wanted to kill Lucius for threatening his godson. Wolf hated Lucius because he had threatened Vaughn, and Lucius hated Wolf because he was the boy-who-lived and had destroyed the prophecy. Wolf was now watching for anything going to close to Sirius so he could stop it. That's when everything slowed down.

Lucius sent a simple hex at Sirius, it was sidestepped with ease and a few curses of his own were cast. Bellatrix and Lucius didn't take much time to aim, they just sent spells in their general direction, not

caring which it hit. When Wolf easily reflected a spell so it singed the edge of Bellatrix's robes, she threw the killing curse without a second thought. Wolf saw it was heading towards Sirius, but Sirius was busy dealing with Lucius' set of hexes. Wolf grabbed Sirius' shoulder and pulled them both down, the killing curse missing Sirius by inches.

The two locked eyes briefly, long enough for Sirius to realize what had happened. Long enough for Wolf to realize it wasn't just because he wanted to save Vaughn from dealing with seeing someone's actual death that he saved Sirius.

Unfortunately, curses keep going until they hit a target. Whether the target is intended or not. With the room so crowded the killing curse had no choice but to take a victim, Sirius' life could not be saved without a price.

Remus was dueling with Dolohov, and was standing right behind Sirius at the wrong time. The stray curse hit him in the center of his back, he was dead without any prior warning. His lifeless body fell to the floor, the first casualty. The noise caused both sides to turn their attention to him. Wolf paled, he was only the second to realize what was happening the first was his killer.

And that bitch was laughing.

-

(A/N: ...Please don't kill me for killing Remus! Please don't kill me for killing Remus! Please don't kill me for killing Remus! Please don't kill me for killing Remus! Please don't kill me for killing Remus! Please don't kill me for killing Remus! Next chapter will be up soon. Please review, even if it's a flame or a death threat.)

Fighting two enemies at once was challenging, but I had welcomed it, it took my mind from my boyfriend fighting and his godfather's eminent death. One of my enemies, vaguely resembling Goyle from school, locked his eyes on something over my shoulder long enough to stun him, and his ally was easily disarmed. He had been looking past me too, perhaps I should know what's going on behind me. All fighting had ceased, and all eyes were fixed on one point, even Sirius and Wolfie(only I'm allowed to call him that!) are staring at a bump on the floor...

Is that Remus?! He wasn't supposed to die, Sirius was! At least I think he is, a room full of arch enemies doesn't usually do this with stunned combatants. Is Bellatrix laughing? What kind of sick person is she? Nevermind, I don't want to know. I really don't want to know.

Poor Wolfie, he never seemed to like Remus, but there was a silent agreement between them. Remus never pryed, never asked questions, was reliable, and Wolfie trusted him like no other adult. And now that's all gone because of me. Wolfie had saved Sirius because of my vision, and now one of his best friends was dead. He was going to hate me now.

For now at least, his hatred was focused on Bellatrix, and rightly so. He turned to her slowly, as if moving quickly would cause him to lose all the self control he had. Wolfie was now glaring at Bellatrix over the lenses of his glasses, his wand aimed at her. That's when Bellatrix figured out that laughing wasn't the best idea considering that she knew that Wolfie was a talented duelist to say the least. He slowly stood, never blinking, and shot a spell that he had tried to teach the SET, but failed because of the complexity. It was a spell that only some of the better aurors could perform, it caused the enemy to lose consciousness for about twelve hours and have a mind numbing headache when they woke up, like a stunning spell on steroids. Wolf's spell missed as Bellatrix began running away.

Without hesitating Wolf ran after her, through one of the few doors in the room and out of sight. The battle began again when Lucius tried to follow Bellatrix and Wolf, Sirius nearly blew him to pieces, but missed by a few inches and made a rather large hole in the wall. At this point the forces were about evenly matched in numbers, making

it so no one could follow Wolf and Bellatrix. And everyone was wondering what was going on between those two.

Tempus Praeter

She lay there, as unnaturally still as Remus was, but she had fallen like a coward. Looking at her, Wolf realized he had killed her. It happened so quickly, one incantation, one scream of terror, and her life was gone. Despite the fact that she was a crazy old hag that killed for fun, he felt sick and wished he hadn't killed her. Not the way he had killed her at least.

There was a slow clapping from behind him that made him turn quickly on instincts alone. Voldemort stood with a smirk that had been seen on many Slytherins' faces(seriously, was there a special Slytherin only class where they learned how to smirk?). "Congratulations, I didn't think you had it in you to perform the killing curse."

Wolf took a deep breath before answering sarcastically, "You seem so upset that she's dead."

Voldemort shrugged, "I have other followers, stronger followers... and braver as well. More importantly, I have you secluded from all help. How convenient."

Wolf had already figured this out and wasn't happy, but then his stupid Gryffindor pride took control of his mouth. "Bring it, Tom."

Voldemort's eye twitched and voice lowered a bit in anger, "So eager to die."

"No, I just don't sense any danger." Ah, famous last words.

"We'll see about that." And that's when their duel began, Voldemort firing the killing curse in every direction, Wolf dodging them and sending curses of his own at Voldemort. A few nasty curses were used by Voldemort when Wolf managed to hit him with the cruciatus curse(he'd already used the killing curse, why not use the others?).

One of which made a deep cut on his torso, which was ignored of course so that Wolf didn't get himself killed.

“What the-” A new voice said, Voldemort turned and looked, followed by Wolf. It was Fudge, ten or so other ministry officials, some workers from the department of Mysteries, a few aurors and Dumbledore. Voldemort suddenly didn't like his chances of fighting his way out and apparated away. Fudge was staring at the spot Voldemort had previously occupied, “He's back...”

“No shit.” Wolf growled, his black robes were covering his injury as he leaned against the nearby wall catching his breath.

“I believe you owe him an apology.” Dumbledore said, receiving a glare from Fudge, “You did make a majority of the wizarding world believe that Harry was insane for his claims.”

Fudge grimaced, “Fine, I'm sorry for causing general doubt in you.”

“And I believe I owe you an apology as well.” Wolf said, confusing everyone present, “I'm sorry I took Umbridge hostage. I cannot guarantee that she will be returned alive.”

Fudge, like everyone else, was at a loss for words. Then they saw Bellatrix, laying on the floor, still and limp. Dumbledore pointed to her body, “Did you kill her?”

“Yes, do you have a problem with that?” Wolf replied, everyone shook their heads as the door Wolf had come from opened, letting in the entire Order and the five members of the SET. They all relaxed when they saw Bellatrix dead and Wolf alive, but Vaughn refused to make eye contact with him, and Sirius was staring at the floor. Hermione and Ron were the only ones to run over to Wolf, and Hermione hugged him, but cringed back looking at her hand. It was covered in blood. She looked at him in concern before peeling his robes back to reveal a large red stain on his clothes, he didn't move to stop her, Vaughn's indifference hurt. He knew she had to hate him for letting someone die, and if she found out about the killing curse...

Next thing he knew, he was at St. Mungo's being healed, Ron, Hermione, Mrs. Weasley, Tonks, Mad-Eye and two healers were the only ones in the room. Apparently Wolf and Vaughn were going home immediately because one of they're guardians had died. So now he was going to be trapped in a house with two people who hated him for killing Remus. If he had just looked around he could have saved Remus, even if it meant killing Sirius... but then he would have allowed Vaughn's vision to come true and she would still be mad. If he had been a better duelist he could have finished the battle before Bellatrix could even throw the curse. This was all his fault.

"Harry?" Ron's voice broke him from the trance, "What should we do with Umbridge? The aurors say she's under arrest for crimes against the greater good, and Snape has a punishment in store for her followers for helping her be evil like she was."

"Sounds good to me, but what about our spy?" Wolf asked.

"You guys have a spy?" Tonks said, "How does that work?"

"He volunteered, and doesn't deserve punishment, but he can't be singled out... Ron, could you apologize to him for me, tell him I'm sorry he got tied up like this." Wolf said.

"Sure, no problem, mate." Ron said patting his back, Hermione hugged him and then the two left with Mrs. Weasley to return to the school. The healers said he was healthy enough to leave, Tonks and Mad-Eye were to escort him to Grimauld Place. During the entire trip, taken by car because Tonks had learned to drive, Wolf never said a word. Mad-Eye watched him stare out the window, remembering how close he and Remus were, and yet Wolf hadn't shed a tear, hadn't cried, and had only talked when it was necessary. From what Remus had always said, Wolf was a self soother when away from his Pack and refused the touch of everyone else. And as for the idea of Vaughn comforting him, she had refused to stay with her boyfriend at St. Mungo's. This behavior was worrying them all, considering that for almost eight years the two had been inseperable.

Sirius opened the door without a word, and watched as Wolf walked under his arm into the house and to the stairs, but no one realized that he stayed far enough down on the stairs to hear what they said. Tonks talked first, "How are you holding up?"

"I don't know, I've just lost my best friend, again. And I didn't even get to try to avenge his death." Sirius' voice was low, but it was obvious tears were close.

"And Vaughn?"

"Up in Harry's room crying, and has been since we got here. How about Harry?"

"Hasn't cried, hasn't talked unless it was necessary. You have any idea what's going on between them?" Moody asked.

Sirius sighed, "Who knows, but it's got Vaughn pretty upset."

Wolf couldn't stand listening another minute, it was bad enough knowing he'd hurt her feelings, but to know that she was crying hurt more than his injury today ever had. They could have stabbed him and twisted the knife in his skin and it wouldn't have hurt him so much. And to have taken the revenge that Sirius deserved to have...

In his own misery Wolf had to smile at his plan. It was simple, a challenge, it would make them both happier, and was illegal. Most of all, he couldn't be traced, which is what he needed to get himself out of the picture. Vaughn and Sirius would get over this faster if they didn't have him as a constant reminder of Remus' death. He executed the first step to his plan quickly, sending a short letter to Ferret and Sable. Now all he had to do was wait until late at night.

Tempus Praeter

"Where's Harry?" Vaughn asked as she walked into the dining room, startling Sirius. Her eyes were red, and her cheeks stained with tears.



Sirius shrugged as he looked at her skeptically, "Since when do you call him Harry? What's going on between you two?"

She slumped into the chair next to Sirius and ran her hand through her hair, "It's complicated, he hates me."

"Since when? Last I heard you two were going out."

"The battle..." She began weakly but obviously wasn't going to finish, a tear ran down her face and Sirius had no idea what had upset her.

"I think you should go to bed, it's been a long day for everyone, and it's nearly midnight." Sirius suggested, "Why did you want to talk to Harry anyway."

"I had a weird vision, it's probably nothing." She answered, "It was Voldemort killing a silver and black wolf."

"That is a bit strange, 'night Vaughn."

"'night Sirius."

Tempus Praeter

It had been a couple weeks of hard research, and making sure that Sirius saw him enough to know he was still here, but not often or for very long. The books for this research were not from the Black family library, they were from a box in the attic that had 'Property of MWPP' on the side. The book was their diary of the process of becoming animagi, and Moony had written his friends' progress in great detail, with the fluff from his gratefulness of their actions. This wasn't necessary, but as an animal it would be easier to run away and harder for others to track because animagi transformations couldn't be observed by the ministry. He had decided that Ferret and Sable deserved a proper goodbye, hence the letter.

He changed back into a human, it was his first full transformation that had gone well. He laughed softly, "Wolf by name and nature."

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(A/N: You might not understand Wolf's whole plan yet, but the next chapter will explain it all. Updating soon. Please review.)

It was the day before most students would return from Hogwarts, Grimmauld Place was being guarded from the outside, but no one was willing to enter and disturb those who were closest to Remus. The next day the Weasleys, Hermione, and the Order would be living there. And because no one was expected today, Sirius jumped when there was a knock on the door at nine in the grabbing his wand, he opened the door to a young man with black hair that looked mad enough to kill. After a moment Sirius finally got out, "Hi... do I know you?"

The man continued to glare at him, "You should, considering you're supposed to be watching over my Cub."

"Oh, Sable, sorry I didn't recognize you." Sirius paused, "What do you mean by 'supposed to be', I am watching over him."

Sable raised an eyebrow, "Really, then you should know how long ago he ran away."

"That's not possible, this place is surrounded, no one could get in or out without the entire Order knowing."

"Just curious, how long has it been since you've seen him?"

Sirius hesitated, "Three days, maybe four."

"This may be news to you, but yesterday he showed up at my house saying he was running away." He looked at something over Sirius' shoulder, Vaughn had come down the stairs when she heard the shouting, courtesy of Sable.

"Sable, what are you doing here?" She said as she pushed past Sirius to hug Sable.

"It's about your boyfriend, though, from the way he was talking, you guys aren't together anymore." Vaughn recoiled, her smile gone.

"It's... complicated." She sighed, "So where's Ferret?"

He seemed to straightened up, "We thought it was better if I came out here alone, but I believe we were talking about Wolf, because I have no idea what the hell is going on."

"It's a long story, why don't you come in and sit down." Sirius said, Sable obliged and they all took a seat in the living room, Vauhgn hugging her knees and sitting far from either Sirius or Sable. Sirius sighed, "Let's start with what you know."

"Wolf sent us a letter a couple weeks ago saying that he was missing us and wanted to visit us before the war made it impossible to do so, so we sent a letter back saying where we were." Sable said, "When he came he hugged us both and said he probably wasn't going to see us again. When we asked him why, he told us that he was going to go fight Voldemort on his own and didn't care if he died. He said it would probably make you two happier. We tried to stop him, but he ran away."

Vaughn made a barely audible whining sound, "This is all my fault." Sirius and Sable just looked at her like she was crazy until she explained, "Wolf has a mental connection with Voldemort that allowed him to see into the deatheater meetings. Voldemort talked about taking something dear to him and using it as bait, later we learned it was supposedly Remus. Shortly after, I had a vision that showed Sirius being killed in the department of Mysteries, Wolf promised to stop him from dying for my sake. Two weeks ago, we found out it was Remus and went to the Ministry, Remus wasn't there but a rather large group of death eaters was, then the Order came. The scene from my vision happened, Wolf pulled Sirius out of the way, but Remus was behind him, and Remus was killed. So it's all my fault."

Sable blinked a few times, "How is it your fault?"

"I told Wolf about the vision, he acted upon it, it killed Remus. Remus wouldn't be dead if it wasn't for me. That's why Wolf hates me." She explained.

"So you don't hate him?"

“No, I never could.”

“Well, he's under the impression that you do.” Sable told her, with the expression on her face he may as well have told him the sky was raining octopi. “He says that he let you down and broke a promise, as for you Sirius, he says he took revenge that was rightly yours.”

Here there was a few moments of silence as Sirius and Vaughn realized that Wolf was going to try to get himself killed because of them. Vaughn hid her face in her hands, Sirius took a ragged breath, “Well, we have to go find him, he couldn't have gotten too far.”

“Did I mention he can now turn into wolf?” Sable asked, he was met with silence. Sirius just froze, but Vaughn lifted her face from her hands with a look of horror on her face.

“Please, please don't tell me that this wolf was black with a silver tail, head and back left paw.” Vaughn said quietly.

“Actually, that's a perfect description of him, why does it matter?” Sable asked, frightened by her detail.

“I foresaw his death! Sirius, do you think you could track him?” Vaughn asked, Sirius nodded and transformed into his animagus form, Vaughn grabbed her coat and the two ran out the door.

Tempus Praeter

“Dammit, dammit, dammit, dammit.” I muttered under my breath. I was so close to death, close enough to taste it, and next thing I know, I'm alive. Am I invincible or something, because at the moment I think I would rather not be. Being an animagus improved my chances of getting away with it, I waited until most of the death eaters had left so Voldemort wouldn't make much of a show, and even kept my wand in my pocket so he had a clear shot... and now I'm alive. Let me just go through what happened again.

I used my legilemency skills on Voldemort, that's how I found out where Voldemort was, a building in a town miles south of London that

had obviously been deserted for a decade at least. The wards didn't protect against animagi, so I slipped in easily and listened in on the meeting. Lucius and several others had been arrested during the Ministry raid, he planned to use Draco to kill Dumbledore as punishment. I guess I have the chance to warn him now. Several deatheaters reported, a few were tortured, and Voldemort began dismissing them, a few at a time to avoid suspicion. When only five remained, including Snape, I made my appearance.

"Master, they have surveillance watching him at all times, he may as well be at Hogwarts." Snape had told Voldemort, giving his report.

"But I'm here instead." I remember saying, though I felt detached, as if I'd already left my body. For a minute they had all just stared at me, as if not sure what to do. Snape, the Order's spy, was hiding his anger at my actions poorly.

Then Voldemort smiled, "So eager to die." He whispered again, I had the urge to agree with him this time. I just wanted him to kill me, to end it. A life with Vaughn hating me wasn't worth living.

I just spread my arms to the side and said, "Bring it, Tom."

Next thing I knew a green light was coming towards me, when it hit me I felt dizzy as I collapsed. Next thing I knew, I was in a bright white room with two doors on opposite sides of the room. Then I realized the door on the left was opening, Remus stepped through the door. He looked different, he didn't have scars, bags under his eyes, his trademark shabby clothes. He looked young, happy...

"I'm dead, aren't I?" I asked him.

He took my hand, and for once I didn't flinch, he shook his head, "Not exactly."

"Well, if you're dead and you're here, shouldn't I be dead if I'm here?"

“It doesn't always work that way, cases like these are... complicated.” Remus explained.

“In my life, everything is complicated.” I mumbled, it made Remus chuckle.

“Unfortunately, you're right. See, you had something else in you, another soul, or part of one. That part of a soul could only be destroyed by it's carrier being killed. Now, it's destroyed, but since the way you died gave it up so willingly, you are allowed to choose between life and death.”

“You do know I was trying to commit suicide by doing this, right?” I had asked, Remus just smiled. Did everyone smile after they died?

“Did you really want to die? I think you made some assumptions that could be cleared up after you've had your near death experience.” Remus told me, damn his logic.

I frowned, “How about this, I go back to life, and if things don't get better, I kill myself before going back to school.”

Remus rolled his eyes, “I guess I can live with-, I mean, I guess I can deal with that. Oh, your parents wanted me to say hi for them.”

“Say hi for me, I guess.” I said, he pointed towards the door he hadn't come from, the door to life. As soon as I touched the doorknob I felt someone holding me, it was weird. Then I realized said person was running through the forest while swearing under his breath. It took me another couple of minutes to realize it was Snape. I decided that I was weirded out enough for one day, I turned into Wolf, literally, and here I am, twenty feet high in a tree trying to figure out whether it's worth being a human again. I think living as Wolf could be quite fun. I could eat rabbit, I like rabbit meat.

“Mr. Potter, will you act like an adult and get down here!” Snape called. I don't want to act like an adult, I didn't have much of a childhood come to think of it.

“Harry, will you please come down here.” Okay, now Sirius was here, but I don't really want to come down.

“You two are pathetic, let me try.” I froze, it was Vaughn, “If you don't come down in three seconds, I'm going to go up there and drag you down myself.”

Feel free, I'm not going anywhere. I thought, because I couldn't say it seeing as wolves cannot speak. I heard Vaughn grumble and then begin climbing the tree with some difficulty, especially as she went higher. When she was close I bit the back of her shirt and helped her reach the last branch before backing up so she had enough room. When she finally settled she looked me in the eyes, she wasn't angry, she was sad.

“Could you turn back into yourself, I'm not used to talking to animals.” She spoke quietly, probably so the adults below us wouldn't hear. I hesitated a moment, but changed even though I had a bad feeling about what she was going to say. She never stopped looking into my eyes as she spoke, “I'm not mad at you about Remus' death, I don't think it's physically possible for me to be mad at you. I'm mad at myself for telling you about my vision, because if I hadn't made you promise to save him, Remus would be alive today.”

“Okay, listen,” I said shaking my head, “You aren't the one who pulled Sirius out of the way, I am. It's my fault, I failed you, I broke my promise. And you didn't make me make any promise. Besides, you aren't the one who used an unforgivable, several actually.”

That's when Vaughn looked confused, “When did you use unforgivables?”

“I used the killing curse to kill Bellatrix, and cruciatus when fighting Voldemort.”

She rolled her eyes, “At least you put them to good use. Now let's get out of this tree.”



“Wait,” I said, knowing she was either going to love me or hate me for this, “On a hot summer night, would you offer your throat to the wolf with the red roses.”

She smiled, “Will he offer me his mouth?”

“Yes.”

“Will he offer me his teeth?”

“Yes.”

“Will he offer me his jaws?”

“Yes.”

“Will he offer me his hunger?”

“Yes.”

“Again, will he offer me his hunger?”

“Yes.”

“And will he starve without me?”

“Yes.”

“And does he love me?”

“Yes.”

“Yes”

“On a hot summer night, will you offer your throat to the wolf with the red roses?”

“Yes.”

"I bet you say that to all the boys." I finished, she rolled her eyes and began climbing down the tree, and I followed after. She usually hated it when I used music lyrics in everyday life, but today she seemed to be okay with it. We reached the bottom and Sirius didn't look mad, Snape however, was a completely different story.

"You have the entire Order and the half of the Ministry still on your side protecting you just so you can go and get yourself killed? Why do you want to die so badly?" He spat.

"I wasn't committing suicide, I was doing research." I told him, "Now that I've done some field work I can move onto bookwork."

"That's besides the point, you should be dead."

"I was, and now I'm not." Then I realized what had been feeling weird since I died, my scar didn't hurt, and Voldemort should be pissed right now. Does that mean... oh, eww. I had Voldie soul in me, that's just gross. The mental connection was gone, but I still had a shortcut to Tom's brain whenever I felt like using Legilemency, and Voldemort was livid. "If I was committing suicide, I could have chosen to stay dead, but a friend of mine told me to give life another chance."

"So, how did you become an animagus?" Sirius asked.

I couldn't help smiling, "Remus keeps very good notes."

"You found that?"

"Yeah, it took me about two weeks to figure out, but I eventually got it."

"You probably aren't very fast in your form yet."

"I think otherwise."

"So it's a race then?"

“I bet I can beat you while carrying Vaughn on my back.”

“You're on.” In less than a minute the three had disappeared into the distance.

Snape shook his head, “Stupid Gryffindors, I wonder when they'll figure out they went the wrong way.”

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(A/N: The musical reference in there was “You took the Words Right out of my Mouth” by Meatloaf. And that's right, Wolf is no longer a Horcrux. And for those of you who are tired of Wolf hating Sirius, your day has come! I'm sorry if my chapters are shorter than usual, but I have no word counter on this computer, a 1997 desktop computer that I named 'clunky'. It doesn't really have spell check either. Please review!)

“Harry, why is the ministry saying you tried to kill yourself?” Hermione asked ten minutes after arriving at Grimauld Place.

“Wait happened to saying hello before jumping to interrogations?” Wolf sighed, “But yes, there were some misconceptions that led me to getting myself killed, but I no longer have a deathwish. Do you know a way to magically split your soul and put it in an object?”

Ron, Hermione, Ginny, and Vaughn just stared at him. Hermione finally spoke very quietly, “Harry, do you have any idea how dark of a magic horcrux production is?”

Wolf nodded, “Of course, you need to destroy a soul in order to split your own and you cannot die as long as one of your soul pieces remains.”

“You went from wanting to die to wanting to be invincible?” Ginny asked, and Wolf realized that he should have brought this up differently.

“No, I have no wish to split my soul. But can you think of someone who would like to?” Wolf explained.

“Voldemort has a horcrux!” Ron almost yelled before Wolf hushed him and he whispered it.

“Actually I think he had eight, though he didn't know about the eighth.”

“How do you know?” Vaughn asked.

“From being in his head it's easy to tell he does not want to die, afraid of it even, horcruxes would ensure he couldn't die. Voldemort would really want to make sure his death was inconceivable, so he would make seven, the most magically powerful number. Now, I'm saying there was eight because I was one of his horcruxes, and I doubt he would try to endanger his own immortality. Make sense?” Wolf watched all four of them nod, “I think I've already destroyed two of them, his diary, the first horcrux he made, and the one in me that I

think was the seventh made. I also believe he was trying to use my death to make a horcrux, so when he came back he made one more.”

Ron blinked a few times, “If you're this smart, how come you're failing potions?”

“I'm trying to save the world from an evil tyrant, and all you can think to do is criticize my potions grade.” Wolf rolled his eyes, “Well, at least I know they're called horcruxes now, that will make research easier.”

“Harry, the only information on horcruxes in the library is that they're dark that you have to sever lives in order to make. At least without going into the restricted section. And after trying to kill yourself, no one in their right mind would give you access to those kinds of books.” Hermione said doubtfully.

“If only we had Lockhart, we could convince him to do anything for an autograph.” Ron said.

“Ron, do keep in mind that you and Harry got him into the insanity ward at Mungo's.” Ginny chided.

“We don't exactly need the school library though, remember, we are in the house of one of the darkest wizarding families to live.” Wolf said.

“You think that there is a book on Horcruxes in the library here?” Hermione asked.

“Why not, they have a book analyzing the history of torture via the cruciatus curse, books on how to raise armies of inferi, books on how to alter the imperius curse to work better on groups like werewolves, vampires, banshees, etc., and my personal favorite, how to make stylish clothes out of your enemies' skin.” Wolf answered watching as they all turned green. In fact, Ginny ran to the bathroom, scaring Sirius who was walking by the door.

“What's her problem?” He asked.

"We dared her to eat a moldy cookie we found under the bed, we didn't think she'd actually do it." Wolf said, Sirius stared pointedly.

"I know you're lying, but the fact that everyone else looks like they might follow soon, I don't want to know. Molly wanted me to tell you that dinner will be in about an hour." And just like that Sirius was gone.

"Harry, are you actually getting along with Sirius? You didn't before... Sorry, I shouldn't have mentioned Remus- Ow, what was that for?" Ron said, interrupted by Hermione elbowing him.

"You should have stopped at sorry, idiot." Hermione said, before looking at Wolf worriedly.

Wolf had his eyes closed and was standing tensely, as if not sure whether he should yell at Ron or hide and cry. After a few seconds he sighed and said, "If you need me I'll be in the library."

After Wolf left Ron looked as if he was seriously going to kick himself, "He's not going to come to dinner, is he?"

Vaughn shook her head, "Not unless the library catches on fire."

Tempus Praeter (Warning: fluff ahead)

"Harry!" Sirius called out in the library, not that he actually expected Harry to respond. When Harry wanted to be alone it was as if he had disappeared. And the other kids' reactions to the simple question of where Harry was weren't very reassuring. Hermione, Ginny and Vaughn all glared at Ron, who quietly said the library. For some reason Sirius couldn't help but think that Ron had said something stupid to upset Harry. Yesterday Harry had gone from suicidal to even being playful, and had even gone as far as to boast of his win in the race home, only because he realized they were going the wrong way first.

That's when Sirius saw him, sitting with his back against one of the book cases at the end of an aisle, his arms hugging his knees and

his forehead resting on his knees. His glasses were set off to the side, suggesting that he was crying. Sirius had found James like this once before, twenty years ago, only James had been found at the quidditch pitch and James had been nervous about his upcoming first date with Lily, not upset about something a friend had said. However, James had been his best friend, not his godson that didn't like adults to talk, touch, or be too close to him. Nevertheless, Sirius moved Harry's glasses to the shelf behind him and sat next to the distressed boy and put his arm over Harry's shoulders. Harry instantly tensed up.

Harry made a deep sound in his chest, very much like a growl, "If that's not Vaughn or Sirius, I suggest you move away from me. I have a knife in my hand and I know how to use it."

"It's me, and I'm surprised that you wouldn't stab me. Until a few days ago, you didn't seem to like me much."

"No one deserves to die, besides, if I stabbed you everyone would think my goal in life is to kill all of my guardians."

"So that's what this is about, Ron brought it up, didn't he?"

"Yeah, Remus... It's hard to accept he's dead. Even though I saw his death with my own eyes, killed his murderer, talked to him in some room between life and death-

"You what?"

"Talked to Remus when I was sort of dead. It's complicated."

"With you, everything's complicated."

"That's what I told him, he completely agrees."

"So you actually died."

“ Mostly dead, the only reason I'm alive is because Remus convinced me to go back to life. When I woke up I was in Snape's arms, and there is nothing scarier in this world.”

“Which explains why you were in the tree.”

“Pretty much.” After Harry spoke it was quiet for a few minutes, and he hadn't even spent any energy trying to remove Sirius' arm from his shoulders. Instead he had sat up a little and leaned into Sirius' shoulder.

“What made you decide to become an animagus right before you tried to kill yourself?”

“The wards let the Order know if a person crosses them, but not animals. It was the only way I could think of to get past them.”

“Really, I should bring that up to the Order, because that means Peter can get in. Now let's get back to the point, are you going to be okay, you're taking Remus' death pretty hard.”

“Remus was the first adult I ever knew that was kind. He was the closest thing to a parent I've ever had.”

“You don't remember your actual parents?”

“I was fifteen months old, I don't remember anything about them. All I know about them is what various people have told me. My earliest memory is when I was about three years old at the Dursleys.”

“What memory is that?”

“Being locked in my closet for a full twenty-four hours without food for the first time. It wasn't the longest period of time, either. I've tried to block out most of my memories of the Dursleys, but that one just won't get out of my head.”

“That's why you've always been reluctant to trust adults.”



“No, I'm reluctant trust adults because for three years I had evade the police, who were by no means gentle, so I wouldn't get thrown into an orphanage where I would be adopted by another family that I was convinced would be just like the Dursleys. When I was eight a cop broke my left wrist while trying to take me into custody. Sable helped me escape from the hospital.”

“Did Remus know all this?”

Harry shook his head, “I was frightened of him when he adopted me, I hid in a corner, didn't talk, it was about a week before I ate. It was an entire summer before I kind of trusted him. He gave me space, I had a room, he told me stories about stuff you guys did in school, it was comforting. And now it's my fault he's dead.”

“Harry, I thought we went over this yesterday, it's not your fault.”

“I don't care what you say, if I hadn't believed Voldemort's stupid mind trick, the Order, and Remus, never would have been endangered.”

“This is a war, people die and you can't do anything about it. If you take personal responsibility for every death during this war, the guilt will kill you, if you don't kill yourself first.”

“You're right, but I don't even know why Voldemort wanted that stupid sphere thing.”

“It was the prophecy that named you the boy-who-lived, Voldemort heard part of it and wanted to hear the rest.”

“Oh, joy, what else did it say?”

“Here, I wrote it down. Dumbledore would have told you in person, but... you freak him out a bit, and he felt it would be easier this way.” Sirius pulled a piece of parchment from his pocket and then frowned, “Okay, how about putting the knife down first.”

Harry looked down at his hand, obviously under the impression he had already put his knife down, and after quickly doing so, took the parchment, "Uh, where did my glasses end up?" After a couple minutes they found Harry's glasses and Harry was able to read the prophecy:

The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord approaches...

Born to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies...

and the Dark Lord will mark him as his equal, but he will have power the Dark Lord knows not...

And either must die at the hand of the other for neither can live while the other survives...

The one with the power to vanquish the Dark Lord will be born as the seventh month dies...

"Let me guess, this prophecy was made the year I was born." Sirius nodded in reply, Harry just looked towards the ceiling, "Whatever power is at work here, I just want to know what I did to deserve this."

"What? Come on it's not that bad."

"Get real, according to this, my entire purpose is to bring on the destruction of Voldemort. 'Neither can live while the other survives', no matter what neither me or Voldemort can live a normal life while the other lives because we'll be hunting one another. He'll be hunting me because he wants his only equal dead, and now that I know every murder he commits is on my head, I won't rest until I've killed him. How is that not bad?"

"I see your point, but after the killing curse backfired on him and he lived, I'm not sure there is a way to kill him."

"For the moment at least he can't, but I'm working on fixing that. That's partly why I'm down here, research."

“You have any idea how dark my family, and therefore the books, are?”

“You're related to the late Bellatrix Lestrange, so it can't be good. My theory is that I need to know what I'm fighting, and as a last resort, fight fire with fire.”

“Just be careful, and eat at some point. You can't defeat Voldemort on an empty stomach.”

Tempus Praeter

“Sirius, what is Harry doing? And for that matter, what are the rest of them doing?” Dumbledore asked, with more than a few members of the Order showing interest, even Snape was looking on with curiosity. In the middle of the room Harry seemed to be meditating. Around him, Hermione, Ron, Vaughn and Ginny were each reading a book and taking notes. Several books were stacked on the side, but whenever someone got within five feet of them, every book would shut and be put on top of the notes. All questions about what exactly they were doing were fairly blatantly ignored.

“I don't know what they're doing any more than you do, why not try asking them?” Sirius suggested.

Dumbledore was about to ask when Harry's eyes opened, “I'm tapping into people's subconsciouses, while I may do horribly at occlumency, I'm good at legilemency. Unfortunately, I sometimes reach into people's minds on accident. Professor Snape, it's not very reassuring that you're on our side when you're imagining yourself killing me with a flamethrower. My target is farther away and has a much larger amount of useful information. Ah, I see my friend is getting back to me.”

The Order watched as a small crane flew into Harry's hands, and with a sharp look from him, no one dared to stop him from opening the note that they didn't know was from Draco:

Thanks for the warning that he was planning something for me. However, he changed his mind on what I have to do before the year's end. He wants me to-

The next words on the page unnerved Harry to the point that he turned to his friends and said plainly, "We have a problem."

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(A/N: Yeah! Cliffie! My friends are right, I do torture my characters. Don't worry, somewhere in this there will a somewhat happy ending. Reviews always welcome!)

“Harry, you just used a silencing charm on the door.” Ginny said, speaking everyone's mind as they watched Harry go over the notes they had taken while he was tapped into Voldemort's subconscious.

“I know, I also know that since there is so many underage wizards here, and one of them is me, and we're under constant surveillance of the Ministry, they couldn't care less if I do magic. They never said a word when I became an animagus. Wolf animagus.” He elaborated when he saw the looks on their faces, then completely changed the subject, “Out of these I think the only two logical ways are basilisk venom and fiendfyre, maybe. Fiendfyre can get out of hand far too quickly.”

“What do you expect us to do? Carry around basilisk fangs?” Ron asked quietly.

“Second year both me and the sword of Gryffindor were covered in basilisk venom, Dumbledore said something about the sword taking in anything that would make it stronger, so I think it's imbibed with the venom.”

“I think we need to talk about that note from Draco.” Vaughn said, Harry sighed and set the notes aside.

“I'd rather not.”

“I know, it's obvious, but we can't help if we don't know what it is.”

“As punishment for Lucius for failing at the ministry, Draco was going to have to kill Dumbledore, but Voldemort changed his mind.” Wolf fidgeted for a minute, “He has to kill me.”

“What?” Was the simultaneous answer.

“Voldemort wants me dead, he thinks I'm invincible, and he wants Lucius to pay with Draco's life. Works out perfectly for Voldemort.”

“But Draco's our friend.” Hermione said, quietly adding, “No matter how much he and Ron refuse to get along.”

“I know, but I can't make any firm decisions about what to do without Draco. Chances are we're going to decide it's every man for himself and hope for the best. I don't think there's anything you guys can do, if he pretends to kill me, and you know about it, you're reactions will give us away.” Wolf clearly wasn't pleased.

“So, we're out of the circle on this one?” Vaughn asked, Wolf nodded sullenly.

Tempus Praeter

“See you tomorrow night, Captain.”

“Ron, if you call me captain one more time, I swear I will-”

“Harry, relax, Ron's just continually reminding you're quidditch captain.” Sirius said.

“Like I really needed one more thing to worry about on top of homework, defeating Voldemort, and who knows what kind of Defense teacher. You said you know who the new Defense teacher, how confident are you that they're on our side?”

Sirius frowned, “Eh,”

“Comforting,” Wolf answered, “Remind me again why I have to go to Hogwarts a day early with Dumbledore.”

“For your safety, and Dumbledore wants to talk about something top secret with you. Now try to be good.”

Wolf just rolled his eyes, “I find your lack of faith disturbing.”

“Potter,” Mad-eye said from the doorway, “Albus is here, and remember that we're taking your trunk to the station tomorrow.”

Wolf headed downstairs, and soon after, he and Dumbledore left and found a deserted park to apparate to Hogsmeade. By the time they had walked onto the Hogwarts grounds, Dumbledore was entirely uncomfortable with the fact that Wolf's responses had been monosyllabic and was fully aware that the sixteen year old didn't like him very much. This is why it took a few minutes for Dumbledore to begin talking, "As I'm sure you know, it is hard to admit mistakes that one has made, and I feel I have made a lot. One of my mistakes was to put you in a position that was so undesirable that you ran from it. And I apologize."

"I'm not sure if I can accept that apology, because I don't know that if you put me with someone other than my Aunt and Uncle it would have been any better. Further more, even if it was better, I probably wouldn't have met the Pack. If I could go back in time and could change anything, I wouldn't. However, that doesn't mean I like you, because I don't." Wolf said, never expressing emotion, "Everyone says you're the greatest wizard of our time and trusts you, and you expect that trust. But you don't trust them, not a single person knows about your past. I believe trust is a two way street, in order for me to trust you, you need to trust me. So far, I'm not convinced."

Dumbledore was quiet for a minute, not used to having such direct confrontation about his flaws, "True as that may be, I think it is time that I tell you some things I have held back on, partly because I am not used to people not trusting me. I feel you need to know my intentions from the beginning, starting with why I left you at your Aunt and Uncle's. I knew they wouldn't make life easy for you, but I had always suspected that Voldemort would return and the power of your mother's love that saved you that night would keep you safe as long as you could call the place a home. Unfortunately, I was thinking far too optimistically when I came up with that plan. For years everyone thought you were dead, until Remus informed me that he had adopted you."

Dumbledore paused, but there was still no emotion on the boy's face as they approached the lake, silently deciding to stand there as Dumbledore talked on, "You arrived the first day of first year and you were independent, angry, clever, and with an attitude that frightened

most of the staff, but the moment you befriended Miss Granger and Mr. Weasley, I knew you had some good in you. The three of you created a trust so strong that by the end of the year you trusted each other with your lives. You faced Quirrell, and won with an ease that no normal first year should have had. Then you didn't appear to listen to me after killing Quirrell, and your friends lied for you."

"I hear more than people think I do, you told me that though Voldemort had been defeated for a while, he was going to come back." Wolf said quietly.

Dumbledore smiled, "Miss Granger was right, you do have a frighteningly good memory. I had, in a way, been testing you first year, just to see if you could guess what was going on, I had never expected you to get as far as you did. Then second year, you brought an old friend with you, a muggleborn, but not even the purest of blood could guess. The two of you were inseparable, but no one could see how you and Vaughn, ray of sunshine that she has always been, could have shared a past. Once again you were able to figure out how to stop Voldemort, or rather his old diary, and then you forgave both girls who were convinced they had gone against you. You seemed to almost know what was going on, and I didn't feel the need to worry you with my suspicions."

"Third year you were faced with something everyone saw annoyed you to no end, you had trouble with dementors. Neither me, nor Remus, ever expected you to get over your independent ways and ask for help, but you did. Then you saved your godfather, but anyone who saw you and Sirius before Lily and James died couldn't believe that you were almost shunning him. I also believe that was around the time we learned Miss Hawthorn was a Seer. Then Fourth year you not only made it through a tournament you technically shouldn't have been in, but you used some of the strangest methods to do so, and you won. You then saved Cedric's life and somehow saved your own. And somehow I still couldn't bring myself to tell you why Voldemort wanted to kill you. Sirius told you about the prophecy, right?"

"Yes,"



“The night Voldemort killed your parents, he was after you because he thought he was carrying out the prophecy. He never expected the spell to backfire, which destroyed him, and gave you that scar. He wanted the prophecy because he only had heard part of it and was hoping it would tell him how to destroy you. He thinks your invincible, but I think it was something different, that you're-”

“That I was one of his horcruxes.”

Dumbledore just stared at him for a moment, “Where did you get the idea of horcruxes?”

“Remus gave me the description when I was dead, Hermione gave it a name.” Wolf answered.

“You and your friends know far too much.”

“Is that a bad thing?”

“No, I suppose not, so what all do you know about your scar?”

“For lack of better words, it is where his soul entered my body, it marks our mental connection, which still exists even though I have already destroyed the horcrux. Tom's diary was also a horcrux, was it not?”

“Yes, and the soul of that horcrux is what was possessing Miss Weasley and Miss Hawthorn. Though I think there are several more horcruxes.”

“I am under the impression eight were made. Just curious, how did you hurt your hand?”

The look on Dumbledore's face suggested that he was hoping that Wolf overlooked the black and withered hand, “Seven horcruxes, but eight pieces of his soul. As for my hand, it's nothing.”

Wolf raised an eyebrow, "Unlike some people, I don't trust that. How did it happen?"

Dumbledore sighed and pulled off a ring with a black stone cracked all the way through, "This is one of Voldemort's horcuxes, recently destroyed, but I, I guess-"

"You couldn't resist trying it on, and it cursed you."

"Yes, the ring had certain magical properties and I couldn't help trying even though I knew it would probably have a curse of some kind on it. The curse will eventually kill me."

Wolf nodded, "So did you destroy it with the sword of Gryffindor?"

"Yes, but how did you know that the sword would work?"

"As you said before, I listen, and I'm clever. What I'm not sure about, is how Voldemort would find it important."

"It belonged to his maternal grandfather, a pureblood wizard. His mother was a witch, but not exceptional, and his father was a muggle that was only with her because of a love potion. It's proof of his heritage."

"So he knows of six, the ring, diary and four others, the last was made in a hurry and I think it's Nagini. The other three would be important items, but I'm not sure what kind."

"You should know that Voldemort thought of Hogwarts as his real home, and thought the founders were geniuses. Each had an object they are known for, Gryffindor had a sword, Hufflepuff had a cup, Ravenclaw a diadem and Slytherin had a locket."

"Tom couldn't have gotten a hold of the sword, but the locket, cup and the diadem he may have been able to find."

"You always call him Tom, why is that?"

“It bugs him, and I'm not afraid to say Voldemort, but it's really annoying to have everyone flinch all the time.”

“That is all I wanted to discuss with you, if I come up with something you should know, or have located a horcrux, I will inform you immediately.”

Tempus Praeter

“Wolf, who's the new defense teacher?” Vaughn asked at the beginning of the year feast.

“Just because I was here yesterday does not mean I know who the new addition to the staff is.” Wolf said rolling his eyes. None of the group was really paying attention to the sorting, mostly they were staring at the new addition to the staff table, a plump man that was bald, and what little hair was left was white with age. Wolf had already caught Draco's eye and silently arranged a time to meet to discuss the current situation. Then Dumbledore stood at the end of the sorting to introduce the new teacher.

“Welcome students, both new and old. I would like to inform of the changes in staff, as you all have noticed, we have a new face. May I introduce Professor Slughorn, our new Potions teacher.”

“Potions? But that means Snape is in charge of Defense.” Ron said with a look of horror on his face.

“I can see why Sirius said 'eh'.” Wolf said, knowing that Dumbledore was about to confirm what they had just realized.”

Sure enough, Dumbledore began speaking again, “Since Professor Slughorn is taking over Potions, Professor Snape will be our new Defence Against the Dark Arts teacher.” The clapping was noticeably quieter than it was for Slughorn.

After the feast a large group of students from various houses came up to Wolf asking if he was doing defense classes again this year,

even his close friends wanted to know. He took a deep breath and said just loud enough for all of them to hear, "I'm not planning on it, Snape, though his methods are at times almost cruel, he's a good teacher. I only did it last year because we weren't learning anything." Then Wolf broke through the crowd and headed up the stairs before taking one of the secret passages and went down the hall way to the place he and Draco had decided to meet.

Tempus Praeter

"You're late."

"I know Potter, but every deatheater's kid heard about my little mission and wants to know if I have the dark mark yet, do you know how hard it is to say that I can't wait to kill you to get it?"

"I can imagine, everyone wants me to overthrow Snape just like I did Umbridge."

"Who's side is Snape really on?"

"I have this strange feeling that not even he knows, but I don't think either of us came here to discuss Snape's loyalties, as exciting as that is."

"I know, and Voldemort actually wants me to die, if I killed you, chances are, he'd kill me anyway."

"I'm not even sure if it's worth planning, because if Voldemort didn't kill you if you killed me, the Order would take you into custody. It wouldn't be a fair fight."

"Someone from your side would interfere, if we could get death eaters here we could have a fair fight and let fate play itself out."

"That's it, we can get death eaters in here."

"Are you insane? People could die. How would we do it anyway?"

“Portkey, there's a Hogsmeade weekend in May that we could use to set everything up right outside, they break in and the two of us fight it out, in a fair fight.”

-

(A/N: I'm just warning you, May is going to be coming fairly quickly and all hell is going to break loose. I'm just excited because this is officially over twice as long as all previous fanfictions I've written. And did anyone see the star wars quote? Hint: originally said by Darth Vader. Reviews always appreciated!)

Hermione was furious at the end of the first class of the year and was staring pointedly at Wolf, and as the bell rang she walked over to him, "How did you do it? How did you make a potion better than me?"

"Come on Hermione, don't you think it's possible Harry just got better over the Summer?" Ron said.

"No." She answered decisively.

Wolf sighed, "In the book I borrowed because I didn't know Slughorn would let me continue potions someone wrote in suggestions. Since there's no way my potion making could be any worse, I decided to try it."

"And you won twenty-four hours of Felix Felicis, do you even know who had that book before you?" Hermione asked, obviously not approving of the method.

"I checked right after I saw that it was working, the only name is 'The Half-blood Prince' in the same hand writing that's written everywhere in the book. Probably some half-blood Slytherin that's full of himself. I'm going to flip through it tonight to try to figure out who this guy is, or if there's anything dangerous about the book."

"I know you're both fascinated with the book, but I think we should be more worried about Snape." Ron said right before they entered the room silently and took their seats, looking at the closed curtains, candles and unappealing pictures that made them all sure that they were in the dungeons.

Snape stood at the head of the room like so many defense teachers had before, "I am surprised many of you were able to get an O.W.L. in this subject considering you have had five teachers in this subject, six if you count student tutoring last year." No one missed the tone he used when speaking the last part, eyes steady on Wolf for an entire second, Wolf didn't seem to notice or care. "However, I shall be even more surprised if you keep up with N.E.W.T. Work which will be much more advanced. The dark arts are many, varied, ever-changing, and eternal. Fighting them is like fighting a many-headed monster, which,

each time a neck is severed, sprouts a head even fiercer and cleverer than before. You are fighting that which is unfixed, mutating, indestructable. Your defenses must therefore be as flexible and inventive as the arts you seek to undo."

Snape then moved on to telling them about non-verbal spells and told them to pair up, a glint in his eye and he made Wolf, Ron Hermione and Neville pair up with the four Slytherins in the group, Draco with Wolf, Neville with Crabbe, Hermione with Goyle and Ron with Blaise. Within ten minutes Neville and Crabbe may as well have had a staring contest, Hermione had hit Goyle with a jelly legs jinx, both Blaise and Ron were blue in the face trying not to say a curse, and every curse Draco had thrown had missed by far enough off that it was pointless for Wolf to even try blocking it. Snape finally stopped everyone, "Obviously, you all need to be shown what to do, Potter, help me with a demonstration." He said and began walking to the front of the room.

"Of course, Professor." Wolf said and followed him, much to everyone's surprise. Snape even half turned to make him call him Professor or sir when he realized Wolf already had.

Of course no one had expected Wolf to bow to Snape as if it were a duel either, but after a moment Snape bowed in return. They both raised their wands and a second later a stream of light bounced off a shield Wolf made, though it was a shadow of his usual work, and then with another flick of his wand he disarmed Snape. It was silent for a minute, Snape had been knocked backwards by Wolf's disarming charm and no one dared say anything for fear they would bring Snape's wrath upon them. Slowly Snape rose to his feet, took a deep breath and quietly said, "Ten points to Gryffindor. By the end of next class I expect you all to be able to perform a duel half as well as that, at the least. You have the rest of the class to do whatever you want. I suggest practicing."

As Snape passed Wolf, he grabbed his wand that Wolf was casually holding out for him. No one moved until Wolf looked at their shocked expressions, "What? He asked me to duel with him and I did. What's wrong with that."

“Two things, you're acting civil towards him, and he gave points to Gryffindor.” Dean pointed out.

“It's a new year, and I don't need anymore enemies than I already have, as to why he gave Gryffindor points, that's beyond me.” He said, and pretty much the entire class began practicing until the bell, many of them getting close to figuring it out.

Tempus Praeter

It was late that night that Wolf was seen looking through his advanced potion making book, occasionally taking notes, Vaughn snuck over and looked at his notes over his shoulder. Most was done in a quick hand that was jumbled, but four words stood out:

Muffliato

levicorpus/liberacorpus

sectumsempra

“What are these?” Vaughn asked, pointing to the four words.

“Spells, the ones that could be useful, a lot of the spells in here are childish pranks, like fast growing toe nails, glueing people's tongue to the top of their mouth, but these are different. From what I understand, the first one makes it so a conversation isn't over heard, the next and it counter curse hang the foe upside down from their ankle's, immature, yes, but also potentially helpful. I'm not sure what the last one is though, and I think it's leaning towards the dark side of magic. Other than that spell, the book seems harmless.” Wolf said sighing.

“Let me guess, no insight on who it is.” Hermione said, still working on her Ancient Runes homework.

“Actually, there kind of is.” He flipped to the last few pages of the text book where there were some dates, Wolf read them aloud, “Most of them are scribbled out, but the last two say 'Seventh year finals



May 10-15, 1977, last day at Hogwarts June 1, 1977'. He finished school the same year as the Marauders."

"Why do you say 'he'?" Hermione asked, "It could be a girl."

"I say it's a guy because one of the scribbled out dates is 'take Jenette Herriot to the Yule Ball December 24, 1976'."

"Point taken."

### Tempus Praeter

As time went on Wolf seemed to get busier and busier, between classes, homework, scheduling Quidditch practices, meditating into Voldemort's subconscious, doing studying on his own and teaching his closest friends what he thought they should know and convincing Ginny not to go horcrux hunting with them. The discussion ended when Krum sent her a letter asking her if she would spend the Summer with him up North and Mr. And Mrs. Weasley gave their consent to go even though she would miss Bill and Fleur's wedding. That didn't change the fact that Wolf was running himself ragged, and after a while, Ron and Vaughn picked the times for practices and delivered the notes they had Wolf write to McGonagal to ask for practice times. Hermione even offered to write some of his essays for him, but he refused. So, it was a relief for all of them when Winter break finally came.

On the train back to London, Wolf pulled a dead rat out of his pocket, making everyone stare. He just smiled, "I caught it last night in the Forbidden Forest. I figured that I would use this to find out what that other spell does." It didn't take long to figure out what it did, it took longer to clean up the mess that it made. The rest of the trip was spent doing homework so they wouldn't have to do it at Grimauld Place, and everyone was able to.

For the first couple of days the five students were catching up on rest they had lost and were engaging very little in conversation. Surprisingly, Wolf talked a lot with Sirius, mainly because he was one of the few that wouldn't remind him of the war. It was one of those

times that the following conversation happened, "Can I ask you a few questions?"

"Sure, what's on your mind?" Sirius said.

"Was there a boy in your year with the last name Prince?"

Sirius thought for a moment and then shook his head, "No,"

"What about a girl named Jenette Harriet?"

"Yes, I remember her, a Slytherin girl who had this birthmark on her left cheek that looked like she'd burned it. No one was really fond of her."

"Do you remember if someone took her to the Yule Ball your seventh year?"

"Yeah, it was Severus Snape, I remember because we we're surprised that he asked anyone after being turned down by Lily."

"What? Snape liked my mum?"

"Yeah, and until about fifth year she liked him too, it wasn't until seventh year that she started going out with James. Come to think of it, I don't think he ever got over his crush on her."

"Thank you for answering those questions, you have no idea how much they helped."

"You're welcome." Sirius said quietly, not understanding in the least how he had helped.

Wolf pretty much ran to the room the whole group was sharing, all of them were lounging on the four beds(they made Ron sleep on the floor, or rather, Hermione did). They all at least gave him the courtesy of looking up when he came through the door, then said, "Snape is

the half-blood Prince, I think his mum was a witch with the last name Prince, and his dad was a muggle.”

“It's Snape, then it is dark magic, right? It is debatable what side he's on.” Hermione said.

“Relax, Snape's on our side, and he has been since Voldemort killed the one person he truly loved.”

“Who was that?” Vaughn asked.

Wolf gave an uneasy smile, “I would really rather not think about it.”

Tempus Praeter

The year went fairly smoothly, Wolf had finally gotten Snape to leave him alone by being far more polite to Snape than Snape was comfortable with. Vaughn, Hermione and Ron had decided to join him in horcrux hunting, meaning all four of them were going to drop out of school next year. In fact, everyone but Wolf and Draco had forgotten that one, perhaps both of them were going to die. It was early May when Wolf got a note from Draco saying that the attack would be the next day. He carefully poured the Felix Felicis he had gotten at the beginning of the year into six flasks of equal amounts, hiding two in his robes.

Then he gave the four others to Vaughn, Hermione, Ron and Ginny, “Okay, I gave each of you enough to last through the battle tomorrow, don't drink it until you know the death eaters are here. Hopefully we'll all be able to get through the battle tomorrow.”

“What about Draco?” Vaughn asked.

Wolf fought himself to make himself look sad, “We'll see.”

-

(A/N: I know that's a short chapter, but I promise the next one will be longer, more exciting and will have Wolf getting very worried, among

other things. I'm just warning you, if you read the next chapter, you have to read the one following it. Please Review!)

Voldemort had just called his death eaters to the Malfoy Residence, where he had decided to make headquarters. Many of the death eaters had gathered, all wearing their black robes and masks. When the circle was filled with only a few exceptions, Voldemort turned to Lucius, "Your son has done well, he has not only weakened the wards around Hogwarts, but he has made a portkey that will take us directly to the Entrance Hall. All we need to do is get to the portkey by the shrieking shack in Hogsmeade by seven, once we are in, we attack any and all adults we find. Leave the children, we will teach them to like our ways."

"Master," Dolohov said, "What about Potter?"

"Draco is taking his mission to the Astronomy Tower, he has found a way to get him there, isolating him from all help. Tonight is the night that the Order of the Phoenix and their Golden Boy shall fall-"

"Wolf!" Vaughn yelled, breaking Wolf from his trip into the subconscious of the enemy to come face to face with Vaughn and Professor McGonagall. "Are you okay?"

"Uh.. yeah, fine, is there something you need?" Wolf said quickly enough to make Vaughn raise an eyebrow, but she said nothing and let her head of house talk to him.

"Mr. Potter, Professor Dumbledore would like to talk to you in his office." She said.

"You wouldn't by any chance know why, would you?"

"Dumbledore said it was business strictly between you and him."

Wolf got a look on his face like he'd just eaten something sour and sighed, "Thanks for telling me." He stood up as McGonagall left, and Wolf looked at his watch, five o' clock, then to the sky, "What did I ever do to deserve this?"

"What's wrong, Wolf?" Vaughn asked, though several others seemed to want to ask the same question.

Wolf faked a smile best he could and said, "Don't worry, things could still go right. Just don't forget Felix."

Wolf then left the Gryffindor Common room and headed straight for the headmaster's office knowing the exact reason Dumbledore was calling him for. He'd found a horcrux, and now, of all times, they were going to go retrieve and destroy it. This would have worked so much better if Dumbledore had figured this out yesterday. Wolf got to the gargoyles and for once was glad that Dumbledore sent him the password everytime he changed it, "Toffee eclairs." The gargoyles jumped to the side immediately and Dumbledore beckoned Wolf in before he even had the chance to knock.

"Ah Harry, I assume you have some idea of why I asked you here." He said.

"My assumption is that you found a horcrux and want me to go with you to retrieve it."

"Your assumption is correct, the horcrux in question is in a cave on the coast and probably fairly well protected. Are you ready?"

"Sooner we leave, the sooner it's over. Let's go." Wolf made a move for the door, but Dumbledore stopped him by putting a hand on his shoulder.

"I think you should take this." Dumbledore was holding out the sword of Gryffindor, Wolf took it gingerly and held it in his left hand, leaving him able to still draw his wand when he needed to. He shot Dumbledore a rare smile and they both left side by side and headed down to Hogsmeade. Once there Dumbledore apparated them to a rocky hillside where they very quickly got soaked. Wolf leaned the sword against the rock wall as he cast a water repelling spell on his glasses, and then looked around. It was an outcrop of rock by the sea, with a steep wall on one side and turbulent water with deadly rocks on the other, and a short ledge in between.

"Just curious, how would Tom know about this place?" Wolf asked.

“It is believed he tortured a couple of kids in the cave when his orphanage came here on vacation.”

“Well, I guess that means Tom has always been a sick and disturbed person, so where do we go now?”

“We swim, I hope you are not opposed to getting wet.”

“Wet I have no problem with, swimming however is not a strong point of mine. I have an idea.” Wolf moved over to a pile of large rocks, finding two that had one side that was more or less flat. He levitated one of them and then stepped on to it and motioned for Dumbledore to do the same.

“Funny how I didn't think of that, very resourceful.” He said levitating the other rock, and then Wolf offered a hand to help him up.

“I lived on the streets of London for three years, you learn to see everything as an asset when you live like that. Lead the way.” Wolf said, and then followed as Dumbledore moved his rock over the water then into a low narrow cavern that had stairs out of the water at the end that the set the rocks down at. They found themselves in a large cave where Dumbledore soon began investigating the walls until he stopped at one.

“This is the place.”

“How can you tell?”

“It has known magic.”

Wolf put his hand on the wall Dumbledore had touched and felt a shiver, recognizing the magic, it was Voldemort's, “You were close, but it's actually right... here.” Wolf said pointing about four feet to the left, where the magic felt strongest. “I'm not sure how to open it, though.”

Dumbledore took Wolf's place by the wall, staring at it deep concentration for a full two minutes. Meanwhile Wolf was trying to figure out what the old headmaster was doing. Finally Dumbledore relaxed and said quietly, "Well that's rather more crude than I expected."

"I suppose I should ask what's more crude than you expected?"

"I think that we're required to make a payment to pass."

"A payment of what?"

"Blood."

Wolf was silent for a moment, "Is there any end to how sick and disturbed Tom is?" He then watched Dumbledore pull a silver dagger from his robes and then pulled up the sleeve above his injured hand, "No Professor, I'll do it."

"You are kind, but your blood is worth more than mine."

"Yes, but I already have a cut on my arm," Wolf pulled up the sleeve on his right arm to reveal a six inch cut on his arm that was maybe half an inch deep and had only a thin layer of scabbing over it, "It would be a shame for us to both have to have our arms sliced open."

Dumbledore looked at the boy wearily, "How did you get that?"

Wolf smiled as he used the silver knife to reopen his cut and smear the blood on the rock, "I lead a very troubled life Professor, and I have my secrets to keep."

A silver arch appeared and the blood smeared rock within simply disappeared. The two walked briskly on into the dark passage beyond, Wolf quickly lighting his wand. All there was to see was a black lake with a greenish glow from where they guessed was the center. Wolf cast a wary glance at the water then picked up a rock and transfigured it into a duck. Dumbledore once again was left speechless, but finally was able to say, "Why do we need the duck?"



"I just want to see what will happen." Wolf said and set the duck by the water, and like a good little duck, it waddled over to the lake and started swimming. About ten feet out there was suddenly ripples around it that startled it into flight, but about six very large, pale creatures jumped up and tore the duck to shreds. Wolf and Dumbledore stood and stared at where the duck had been for several seconds before Wolf cleared his throat, "Well, that was... frightening."

"But did you learn anything useful from that?"

"Yeah, there's a boat or something in here somewhere, something that Tom could use to get to the horcrux." Wolf said and began walking clockwise on the thin ledge that went all the way around the lake, Dumbledore followed. Both were looking for trace magic that would be connected to the way Voldemort would cross the lake. Suddenly Wolf stopped and checked to make sure Dumbledore was still with him, "There's something here."

Dumbledore sensed the same thing and soon found an invisible chain and with a tap of his wand he pulled a boat from the bottom of the lake. And it wasn't a big boat either. Dumbledore gestured for Wolf to get in, "Unless I'm mistaken, the boat is meant to hold one wizard and since you're-

"Only sixteen, not a wizard magically so it shouldn't count me and we should be fine. Let's hope we're right." Wolf finished for him and climbed in the boat, and Dumbledore climbed in after him. As soon as they were as comfortably seated as they could in the boat it began to move towards the middle of the lake smoothly without outside help. They mentally prepared themselves for whatever the light was in the middle, Wolf, unfortunately, couldn't help but looking into the black water. He made a sound that was like he was choking.

"Are you okay?" Dumbledore asked.

"I think I just saw a human hand."

"Yes Harry, we each have two of those."

“No, I saw one in the water- Oh, pleasant.” Wolf continued, now with a look of disgust on his face. Dumbledore caught his stare and saw the man floating face up inches below the surface.

“Well, as disgusting as they may seem, they are peacable at the moment and therefore, not one of our concerns for the time being. After we have the horcrux, it may be a completely different story. How much do you know about inferi?”

“Re-animated corpses, generally used as armies, they fear fire, and it destroys them.” Wolf said chacking his watch, a quarter to six. The boat stopped, they had come upon a small island with a pedestal that had a bowl containing a glowing green liquid. Wolf sighed, “How come I have a feeling that whatever's in that bowl isn't what you would call healthy?”

“Because you're probably right.” Dumbledore said trying to touch the liquid with his injured hand, but couldn't because of some invisible barrier. The two of them tried every spell they could think of, but nothing worked, “I suppose it will have to be drunk.”

“But couldn't it be poison?”

“No, I do not think he would want to kill whoever got this far.”

“Not immediately, but this is the same sick and disturbed man who made us make a blood sacrifice, filled a lake with bodies and tried to kill a baby.”

“He would first want to know how they got to the basin, and why they wanted to get there. He doesn't believe anyone knows about his horcruxes. However, this potion will do something, paralyze me, give me amnesia, have an effect like the cruciatus curse, or render me incapable of taking the horcrux in other ways. You must not let me stop drinking until it is empty. Understood?”

“Sure, don't let the old dying man stop drinkng the liquid that could kill him, got it.”

Dumbledore shook his head as he summoned a crystal goblet, "That's putting it awfully blunt." He then filled the cup and began drinking, making it to the fourth cup before he started having difficulty. He barely got down the fifth, and Wolf had to force him to drink the last six, several times convincing him it was poison that would kill him and stop the immense pain he was in. Afterwards he started begging for water, Wolf tried filling it using magic, but it just emptied before he could give it to Dumbledore, which left the lake.

Then Wolf smiled as he remembered an old spell. He reached down into the water with the goblet and filled it with water, this time it didn't empty as he handed it to the headmaster. However, he did have a hand attached to his wrist. With his other hand he pointed to the ceiling of the cave and said, "Solaro."

A bright ball of light soared to the ceiling and became a sun in the cave, lighting the entire room and warming it up. Wolf watched as the inferi, including the inferi-hand attached to his wrist, burn into ashes that made a thin layer over the water. Wolf grabbed the locket, throwing it around his neck he looked at Dumbledore questioningly. Dumbledore faked a smile, "I am weak, but fine other than that. I don't recognize the spell you used."

Wolf let Dumbledore use him as a crutch as they made their way to the boat, then the boat began moving toward the exit, sealed off again, "It won't last more than another couple of minutes. It was a spell created by Merlin to stop inferi from attacking during eclipses. I read about it three years ago, I'm surprised I remembered it."

Wolf had Dumbledore hold the sword of Gryffindor as he once again broke his cut open to open the door. Wolf was able to fuse the two rocks they had used to fly there on so he could fly the two of them back together. It didn't take them long to get back to the opening. Wolf looked at Dumbledore, he was weakened beyond the bounds of using magic. Wolf sighed, "Do you trust me to be able to apparate us back?" Dumbledore nodded and a second later the rock they had just been standing on fell into the water, empty.

Alius Positus

Harry looked at his watch again, twenty to seven. The death eaters and Voldemort would be arriving any minute. He looked at Dumbledore and sighed, "You need to hide in hogsmeade, now."

"Why?"

"There's going to be death eaters here soon and you're in no condition to fight. Will someone here give you shelter?"

"Rosmerta may, how long have you known about this?"

"Longer than you'd care to know. I need to get back to the castle and help though." Wolf said, and five minutes later he was flying one of Rosmerta's brooms to the Astronomy tower. He quickly hid Slytherin's locket beneath his shirt, it would be really bad if Voldemort saw it. At five til the hour, Draco arrived.

"Where have you been Potter?" Draco asked.

"Far enough away I'm surprised I made it back in time."

"You ready to do this."

"I better be."

Tempus Praeter

Vaughn and Sirius followed the death eaters up the stairs two steps at a time, why these two were headed to the Astronomy Tower was beyond them, but they were willing to fight them anywhere. When they reached the top, both death eaters stopped and were watching two duelists, and made no attempt to interfere with the duelists or fight Vaughn and Sirius. That's when she realized just who the duelists were, "Wolf..." She silently said Draco in her head.

Apparently the two death eaters were there to ensure no one interfered with the two battling. And battling they were, there was never a second where there wasn't a spell flying through the air, just

barely being dodged, blocked or countered. Then Draco disarmed Wolf, and everyone there could see it was a lucky shot, Wolf then pulled out his only weapon, Gryffindor's sword. A few more spells and swings of the sword left Wolf's arm bleeding from *sectumsempra*, and Draco had a gash above his left eye and along the thumb on his wand eye. That's when Draco used a spell to fling him from the tower, to die by falling who knows how many stories.

Wolf's last effort was to throw the sword of Gryffindor at Draco, the hilt hitting his chest and throwing his wand from his hand and him from the tower. Both of them were dead in less than three seconds. Sirius froze, but Vaughn's anger lashed out, petrifying one of the death eaters and stunning the other other and rushing to the railing of the tower that she and her boyfriend held so dear. She could see their two forms sprawled on the ground, something shining in the moonlight feet away. The sword of Gryffindor. She wasn't sure how long she just stared at them, lying dead, but it was long enough for Sirius to tell her she needed to move. Eventually, he just picked up the lamenting girl. She was lifeless.

### Tempus Praeter

Dumbledore stood at the head of the room looking over all who had fought, the entire Order, the staff, minus Snape who had fled after nearly killing Dumbledore who had returned in the midst of the battle, and half the SET. Dumbledore looked grim with blood on his robes, "As you may be able to tell, I will probably not live to see the morning, I have been severely injured and have had a deadly curse on me for about ten months. You are all very brave for fighting. If you know of someone who died in battle, please speak up."

A few students were called, Bill Weasley had been declared maimed by a werewolf, but Vaughn, who spoke last, made the biggest impression, "Draco and Harry both died, that was the only fight that mattered. The death eaters were only here to make sure no one interfered with their fight. Everyone in the SET knows that Draco has always been on our side, that's why Harry made sure the fight was as fair as it could be. Both fell from the Astronomy tower without their wands. Because of Harry's death, and Dumbledore's coming,

Voldemort will have almost no opposition and will take over. We've lost."

-

(A/N: Just read the next chapter. Hopefully I remembered to load it at the same time as this one instead of being mean and killing the main character and making you wait.)

It had only been two weeks since the battle at Hogwarts had killed the only hopes of beating Voldemort. Voldemort was using a puppet to control the ministry, and had made it so he would be immediately alerted if anyone said 'Voldemort'. Snape was now the headmaster of Hogwarts, where there had been a funeral for Harry, Dumbledore and Draco, who none questioned that he had been a spy. Today was also the day that everyone was moving from Grimauld Place to the Burrow because Snape had access to it. Vaughn wasn't going with them though, she'd left a note when she left early this morning to go to a familiar old place to end it, a small park on Lynton road.

Vaughn stood by one of the trees, remembering the first time she had come here. No more than a week after receiving her Hogwarts letter Sable had brought her here so she could play with other kids. That's when she saw him and stopped in her tracks, against all odds she had found the one person that she had been bestfriends with forever, but three years seems a lot longer when you're younger. Cub, as he was called then, looked healthy, but not precisely happy. Lonely was closer to the truth. When she sneaked up on him, sure he fell on his face, but his face lit up just like it had in the old days and hugged her without hesitation. In the five years after that they had just gotten closer to each other, and almost three years ago started dating. After last summer when Wolf tried to kill himself she thought there couldn't be a pain worse than him not loving her, but she was wrong. She'd rather have him not love her than not be there at all.

She pulled a pocket knife from the pocket of her black jeans, she'd worn all black every day since Wolf died, even though to do so she had to borrow several of his shirts, like the one she was wearing now. She looked around to see if anyone was around as she leaned her back against the trunk of the tree and held the blade to her chest ready to make the fatal blow as she closed her eyes.

“I really hope you aren't doing that on my account.”

The voice made her jump, especially when she looked around and saw no one. What really bothered is who the voice belonged to, or used to at least.

“I would suggest looking up.”

Against everything that told her not to, she looked up, and just where he'd been five years ago was Wolf sitting on a branch, smiling. Vaughn took a few weary steps back, she closed her eyes, shook her head and looked again. He was still there. “But you're dead...”

He shook his head, “No I'm not.” He jumped off the branch and took her hand before she could move away, “I'm alive.”

“But I watched you die, I saw your body afterwards, I watched your body buried.”

“My body was an imitation made with magic, I never lost my wand, I saved myself using magic. Draco didn't die either.”

“But how? What's going on? And where's Draco?”

“Hello.” Draco called, hanging upside down from the branch Wolf was just on, then he swung up, grabbed the branch and jumped to the ground, “That answers one of your questions.”

“Before answering the others, can you put away the knife, it's a bit daunting- Is that my shirt?” Wolf asked.

Vaughn put away the knife, “Maybe.” She answered while still reasonably freaked out, “But I believe you still have questions to answer.”

“Sit down, it's quite a bit of a story.” All three of them, supposedly dead in everyone's eyes, sat at the base of the tree. “You already know that Draco was supposed to kill me two weeks ago, well we talked the first night at Hogwarts. We came to the conclusion that neither of us wanted to die, kill the other one, or be killed after killing the other one. So we decided to make our own plan that first of all, stopped anyone from interfering with our fight, which is why I helped Draco bring the death eaters in. Then we had to fake our deaths, which actually began with making the fake bodies, real in every way except that the insides were full of a hard jello like substance.”



“It actually was jello, but it tasted like someone had mixed together every flavor of Bertie Botts Every Flavor Beans. It was gross.” Draco added, this information obviously found by trying it.

“Anyways, all year we were practicing the duel we were going to have because we needed to make it believable. Truthfully, most of the bleeding was scabs that we never let heal, neither of us were hurt in the actual battle, well, Draco was hit with the sword, but considering the circumstances, everything went well. Of course, the fact that we both had had Felix Felicis was a great help. Once we got to the bottom we placed our fake bodies and using my dad's invisibility cloak we went to the locker rooms at the quidditch pitch where we hid our bags of stuff to bring, then we went to Hogsmeade during the funeral and apparated out here, where I knew you would go to kill yourself.”

“So you've been here a couple weeks?” Vaughn asked.

“Yeah, we even visited our old home, or tried to. They cemented the entire space under the bridge. I'm glad we made such an impact on the community.” Wolf said.

“On like the third day we were here we went to this little bakery that I'd seen. Harry forgot that it was the same bakery Remus used to work in, and they recognized him right away. Poor Harry, they asked how Remus was doing.” Draco said, putting a hand on Wolf's shoulder, who shrugged it off with an annoyed look.

“What did you tell them?” Vaughn asked.

“That he was murdered.” Vaughn raised her eyebrows at his answer, but he just shrugged, “They believed it, and it's true. They knew how close I was to him, and took the news with a bit of grievance.”

“Can I ask what you were doing with Dumbledore before you, 'died'?”

Wolf sighed, "Well, Dumbledore at the very beginning of the year told me that if he found a horcrux he would tell me and we would get it together. Of course, he chose then to tell me he'd found one, we got it and barely returned in time for me to fight Draco. Unfortunately, there's a problem."

"What?"

"We weren't the first to get there. The horcrux we found was a fake." Wolf pulled Slytherin's locket from his pocket, opened it and gave her the piece of paper inside it.

To the Dark Lord

I know I will be dead long before you read this

but I want you to know that it was I who discovered your secret.

I have stolen the real horcrux and intend to destroy it as soon as I can.

I face death in the hope that when you meet your match,

You will be mortal once more.

R.A.B.

"So now we have to find this R.A.B. Person and find out if he was able to destroy the locket. Great." Vaughn said rolling her eyes.

"Actaully, R.A.B. is dead and has been for almost seventeen years." Wolf said.

"You know who he is?"

"Sirius talked about him all the time while he thought I wasn't listening to him. Regulus Arcturus Black, Sirius' brother who was three years younger than him. While Sirius was the rebel of the family, being a Gryffindor, against Tom, was fair to muggles, Regulus was the pride of the family, captain of the Slytherin Quidditch team as

Seeker, perfect student, and one of Tom's inner circle. Until the end, when he realized how far deep he was and did the only thing he could to try to overthrow Tom, but he didn't know how many horcruxes there are. He tried to ask Sirius' forgiveness before he did this, but he didn't seem to expect forgiveness, nor did he get it."

"So how do we figure out where the horcrux is now?"

"We need to talk to Kreacher, to get the horcrux he would have needed an underage wizard, a house elf or a goblin. We're voting on house elf. Any other questions?"

"What about Ron and Hermione?"

"We're still working on that plan."

"Where's the sword of Gryffindor?"

"Well, it was present in our fighting, we made a fake, but it probably won't last long."

"Where are we going to stay?"

"Follow us, you won't believe this." Wolf said getting up, and then led the three of them down Lynton Road to a building that looked closed. Wolf walked up to a first story window and lifted up one of the boards that blocked it, "Ladies first."

Vaughn gave him a weary look before climbing through the window and ending up in a small undecorated room that only had a small bed in it. Outside the window the boys were arguing on which one should go first because of the ladies first rule. It ended up being Draco. Vaughn started investigating the apartment, there was two bedrooms, the bare one she was just in and the one with a few books just across the hall. Then there was a bathroom and a living room/kitchen. Vaughn smiled, "This is where you and Remus used to live, isn't it?"

"Yep," Wolf answered, his face somewhere between a frown and a smile, "And that corner over there is where I slept the first Summer."

“You slept in a corner when there was a perfectly good bed in the next room?” Draco asked.

“You would have to if you'd had the same experiences with adults. I had never slept in a bed before going to Hogwarts.”

“What about when you were with your Aunt and Uncle?”

“Slept on a shelf in a broom cupboard, sometimes without seeing the light of day for days. You know our childhoods, what about yours?”

Draco just kind of stared at Wolf for a minute, “I know you guys had it worse than me, being orphans, but by the time I was nine I might as well have been. When I was younger my parents took care of me, but as I got older and older they payed less attention to me. When I got to Hogwarts I was pretty much a trophy to show off, that's the only reason my parents ever seemed to like me. Then last Summer they suddenly realized I was a person. I'd already started to think for myself, which is something a lot of the kids in the circle of friends my parents kept me in won't do for another five years. If you want to know why so many Slytherins are death eaters, it's because they let their parents think for them and get them in too deep to claw their way out. That's why I was so ready to accept this plan. Happy now?”

“No, depressed.” Vaughn said, “We don't get a childhood and now we don't get to be teenagers because of this stupid war. So, let's talk about how we're going to get the boy over shadowed by all his brothers and the girl who's parents don't want her in the war into our little group without telling the world we're alive.”

“I have an idea, but it'll have to wait until Bill and Fluer's wedding which is... four days off.” Wolf said.

Tempus Praeter

Just when they thought a house elf's eyes couldn't get any bigger, Vaughn, Draco and Wolf were proven wrong by Kreacher, who they

had just tried to convince they weren't dead. Kreacher continued to eye them with suspicion and curiosity, "Why are you here?"

He had been addressing Draco directly, being he was closest to the Black Family line, "We came to make sure that a project of Regulus' was finished." Kreacher seemed to be interested the moment Regulus was mentioned. "Did he give you a locket right before his death, or did you ever see him with one? We don't want him to have died in vain."

Kreacher shivered and nodded, "Master Regulus joined the Dark Lord when he was sixteen, master Regulus was proud to serve. One day master Regulus said that the Dark Lord required an elf, Kreacher was happy to help. Master Regulus told Kreacher to go help the Dark Lord and then come straight home. The Dark lord took Kreacher to a black lake in a cavern by the sea, then took Kreacher on a boat to the center. There was a basin full of potion, the Dark Lord made Kreacher drink all of it. The potion hurt Kreacher, made Kreacher see horrible things. The Dark Lord laughed and made Kreacher finish the potion. The Dark Lord put the Locket in the basin and filled it with more potion. Then Kreacher followed master Regulus' orders and came back."

"Harry, you okay?" Draco asked.

Wolf had paled a little and looked angry, "Regulus hid you for a long time didn't he? Then one night he asked you to take him to the cave ...The Dark Lord... took you to."

Kreacher eyed Wolf, "Yes, Kreacher took master Regulus to island in the black lake. Master Regulus took out a locket just like the Dark Lord's and... and he..." The rest of Kreacher's words were swallowed with tears.

"Regulus told you to take the locket, and switch them when the basin was empty," Wolf watched as Kreacher nodded after everything he said right, "He ordered you to leave without him, go home and never tell Mrs. Black. And to destroy the locket the first locket. He drank the potion, you swapped the locket and watched him dragged

under the water. So you were a good house elf and went home, never told Mrs. Black why her son disappeared, and tried to destroy the locket."

"Nothing Kreacher did even made a mark!" The elf burst out, "There was no way to destroy it without opening it, and Kreacher could not open it."

"Kreacher," Draco said softly, "Do you know where the locket is now?"

"Kreacher hid master Regulus' locket in master Regulus' room. Follow Kreacher." Kreacher started up the stairs with speed they didn't know was possible from such an old creature. Draco followed without hesitation and was followed by Wolf, Vaughn took her time, still upset that the boys decided she shouldn't talk because it might make Kreacher less willing to speak.

Once in Regulus' room, Kreacher went straight for the wardrobe and opened it. He pointed to the top shelf, Wolf grabbed the locket as Draco gave Kreacher the fake locket as a thank you. They all thanked Kreacher for his help and quickly apparated back to the apartment on Lynton. Once safely in the apartment, Wolf handed Draco the horcrux and went to get the sword of Gryffindor, "Okay, you open the locket, and I'll break the horcrux. Tom's soul tends to be very violent, so the faster we destroy it, the better off we are. I'm ready whenever you get it open."

Draco went to pull it open but nothing happened, after a couple minutes he finally gave up, "It won't open."

"Give it to me, pretty boy, you're probably just not strong enough to get it open." She said tauntingly and took the horcrux, and struggled with it for a moment, "Maybe there's a spell of some kind keeping it closed."

"Oh, I can't get it and I'm weak, you can't get it and magic is keeping it closed." Draco complained, rolling his eyes.

“I think she's right though, here, we'll trade places,” Vaughn and Wolf traded the horcrux for the sword of Gryffindor, “After all, this is Slitherin's locket, passed down from heir to heir for generations. I think parseltongue will open it.”

“But can you still speak parseltongue without Tom's soul?” Vaughn asked.

Wolf shrugged, “I guess we'll find out. Open.” The last word came out as a hiss and with a small click the locket opened to reveal two glass mirrors.

Before the windows could even clearly show Tom's eyes, Wolf had to move out of the way of Vaughn stabbing the locket. In one move, both of the mirrors shattered, the horcrux destroyed. Draco just kind of stared at her, “You didn't waste any time with that.”

“I've already been possessed by Tom's soul, and I didn't want him to play tricks with my mind again.” Vaughn said handing the sword to Wolf, “Now we just have to pack so we can get on with our plan to get Ron and Hermione.”

Tempus Praeter

The Burrow had been a happy place just hours ago, but as the sun set and the wedding ended, there was no distraction from the recent deaths. First there had been Harry and Draco, the next morning Dumbledore, a few Order members working at the ministry, and just a couple days ago they had found Vaughn's suicide note, though they could hardly blame her. Sirius had been unenthusiastic for the last couple of weeks, having trouble dealing with everyone close to him dying. Hermione had sent her parents to Australia after changing their memories, and along with Ron she had tried to convince Mrs. Weasley that they had to finish something that Harry had left for them.

“If it's that important, you should let the Order do it.” She told them.

“We can't, this is something that Harry knew as few people as possible should know about, and we agree. We need to do this.” Ron told her.

“Surely he told someone else.”

“All three of them are dead.” Ron said, and Molly Weasley's face fell, “We have to do this, if we don't, You-Know-Who can never be defeated.”

“It's not much of a war, some fifty members of the Order and who knows how many underage wizards against the entire ministry and magic community.” She said, it was the thoughts of most people in the Order, “We can't win.”

“You're wrong.” Hermione argued.

“Hermione, she's right.” Sirius said, it was the first thing he'd said in days, “If we still had Dumbledore, maybe. If we still had Harry, maybe. But we don't have either of them, and because of that, we have no hope.”

Hermione shook her head, “You may have given up, and everyone else might have too, but as long as there is even one person willing to fight, we still have a chance. Ron and me are going to fight until the day we die, no matter what anyone else says. We will not give up.”

The two adults weren't sure what to say, and in their silence the two walked out of the room and up the stairs. Half way to Ron's room, Ron sighed, “We have to leave soon, tonight is probably best. Mum's not going to let us leave, despite the fact that everything you said is true.”

“I just wish we knew more about what we had to do, I know Harry said we knew everything he did, but he has a lot more insight on the issue. What if we can't do it?”

Ron opened the door to his room and closed it behind him as he followed Hermione in, “We'll figure it- Bloody hell.” Both he and



Hermione stopped in their tracks when they saw who was sitting on Ron's bed, it was Vaughn.

“Muffliato.” She said with a casual flick of her wand, “Surprise?”

“But you left the note... said you were going to kill yourself.” Hermione said with wide eyes.

“Yes I did, but that doesn't mean I actually killed myself, just that I had every intention of doing so.” She smiled, “Draco and Harry are alive too.”

Ron and Hermione were speechless by this point and decided to just sit down and wait for the explanation that Vaughn would eventually give them.

“The boys faked their deaths, both using Felix Felicis.” Vaughn began, “The bodies we buried were fakes. They've been living in London ever since trying to think of a way to get you guys so we can all horcrux hunt together. So, can you guys be ready to leave in half an hour, we're meeting the boys in forty-five minutes.”

Hermione and Ron looked at each other before nodding that they could and then hurrying to finish packing bags, Hermione remembering to grab a tent. It was a rushed half hour as they rushed to get ready to leave as Vaughn filled them in on everything that had happened. When the half hour mark rolled around they had already started down the stairs, Vaughn with the invisibility cloak on holding on to the back of Hermione's shirt so they knew where she was. Ron put his hand on the doorknob when Sirius said from behind them, “She won't be happy that you didn't even say good bye.”

“She's not going to be happy no matter what. Are you going to stop us?” Ron asked, feeling Vaughn move to his arm.

Sirius shook his head, “No, I am going to ask to go with you though. I want to help, and it will put Molly's mind at ease to know there's an adult with you.”

“Sorry Sirius, but we need to do this on our own.” Hermione said.

Sirius nodded, “I never saw you two, but if I had, I would have wished you luck.”

“And we would have done the same.” Ron said opening the door, letting both of the girls through before closing it behind him, trying not to look at Sirius' sad face.

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(A/N: Ah, the horcrux hunting begins. Next chapter will be the reunion of all five of them, them taking stock of the situation and things generally going badly. Please Review!)

They'd all met and hurried to the Lynton apartment to greet each other properly, and everyone hugged one another

They'd all met and hurried to the Lynton apartment to greet each other properly, and everyone hugged one another. The fact that Ron and Draco were almost forced to at knife point was decidedly ignored. Hermione and Ron told them about what was going on with the Order's view on the war, Wolf frowned, "There's not just two sides to this war anymore, it used to just be the Order and Tom. Now there's Tom, the side that doesn't know what's going on, the side that hopeless, and the few wizards that are still fighting."

"So is there anything else we need to know?" Ron asked.

"Well, me and Dumbledore found a fake locket before we died, but Vaughn and Draco helped me track down the real one and destroy that." Wolf answered.

"For those of you trying and failing to keep track of all this, the seven horcruxes are the diary, the locket, the ring, the cup, the diadem, Wolf and Nagini," Vaughn began, but Hermione interrupted.

"Nagini?"

"Yeah, giant snake that Tom takes everywhere with him, only creature that could possibly love him," Vaughn elaborated, "So far the diary, ring, locket and Wolf have been destroyed."

"I would really appreciate you wording that differently, you make it sound like I blown up or something." Wolf complained.

"Are you guys going to let me finish?" Vaughn exclaimed, everyone was quiet, "Thank you, now we just the cup and diadem before going after Nagini, who will be with our good friend Tom."

"All the while keeping our existence a secret from the magical community." Draco said, "Harry and I have already ensured we have enough muggle money to last at least a year, though we do hope this will take less time."

“So does anyone know where we should look?” Hermione asked, only to be met with perfect silence.

“I don’t know,” Wolf admitted, “He would put them in places important to him, the locket was in the first place he tortured muggles, the ring was in the house belonging to his last pure blood relative. What throws me off is that from my understanding, he gave the diary to Lucius Malfoy. The only two other places I can think of is Hogwarts, which at this point would be a bad plan, and Albania.”

The room was quiet as they contemplated, Ron looked confused, “Where the bloody hell is Albania?”

“Just South of Yugoslavia.” Draco answered, but Ron looked at him as if he was speaking Russian, “Okay, Northeast of Greece? Across the strait of Otranto from Italy? Have you ever seen a map of Europe?”

None of this was helping Ron at all, “I thought Yugoslavia was in Asia.”

Draco just stared at him, “No, it’s a mountain and forest country on the far western end of the Mediterranean Sea.”

“Why do you even know that?” Ron exclaimed, the three not involved in the discussion were resigning themselves to the fact it was going to be like this the entire time with those two.

“My grandmother’s cousin’s half sister lives there.” Draco said with an undertone that suggested that he too thought he shouldn’t have to know that information.

“So, are we off to Albania?” Hermione asked.

Wolf sighed, “It seems so.”

Alius Positus

Molly Weasley was glancing at the doorway to the kitchen every two minutes, every time more annoyed than the last. Finally she put her hands on her hips, "What in the world is keeping those two from coming down to breakfast, I'm going to go get them."

"Don't bother," Everyone stared at Sirius, partly because of his prolonged silence, partly because they didn't understand his statement.

Molly glared at him, "What exactly do you mean by that?"

"I mean you shouldn't bother going to get them, you won't find them."

"Oh, and I suppose that you know where Ron and Hermione ran off to?"

Sirius shook his head with a mixture of sadness and pride on his face, "No, but they're gone, I watched them leave."

"And why didn't you stop them! They can't go off into the world, they're just children!" Molly argued.

Sirius shook his head again, "First of all, they're of age. I know you've raised seven children, but you don't seem to realize just how mature Ron is. Besides, the two of them have just as much experience as we do fighting, and considering how young they are, it's sad. And after yesterday, I wouldn't dream of stopping them, much less try. I asked if I could join them."

"And they refused?" Molly yelled. "The two of them could have least have brought an adult with them."

"Molly, they can take care of themselves better than any other two teenagers I know," He said staring Molly in the face, then quietly added, "Except for Harry and Vaughn."

The room was silent, no one was quite ready to talk about the Seer and the Savior. It had been hard enough to deal with the couple being

gone, but it was silently agreed that no words could describe them. Two orphans that went from living on the streets to the most well known wizards of their generation, were as loyal as loyal could be to one another. Molly, who had seconds before been livid, took in the weight of the statement. She then smiled, "I guess that if they're good enough to be ranked among Harry and Vaughn, they should have no problems. That won't stop me from disapproving their actions, but my mind will be at ease."

After another quiet moment Tonks spoke, "I still find the whole secretive business funny though, what are they doing?"

"All I know is that it has to do with destroying You-Know-Who." Sirius replied, "And all that research they were doing."

"Did anyone look at those books to see what they were about?" Moody asked gruffly, though the question was one that everyone wanted to know the answer of.

"No, and Vaughn made sure of that before she killed herself." Sirius answered, hiding how upset he was badly, "The day she got to Grimauld Place she unlocked a trunk that had all of they're research and books in it, dumped them in the middle of the street at midnight and burned them."

"With magic?" Molly asked.

Sirius shook his head, remembering the sad sight of that night, "She used a muggle contraption. Then she watched as the fire burned it all to ashes, and walked slowly back inside pausing next to Ron and Hermione only to tell them that they knew what they had to do, and she couldn't help them."

"So she was planning to kill herself from the night he died?" Charlie asked, he had decided to stay a few days after the wedding and was still having trouble dealing with how the current generation at Hogwarts was dealing with the war.

Sirius nodded, "Knowing her, it was the second he stopped breathing."

## Tempus Praeter

In hindsight, the five of them realized that deciding to go to Albania and actually getting there were two entirely different levels of difficulty. Only three of them could apparate legally and could be depended on not to splinch, and another could apparate, but not legally. Then there was the problem of not knowing what Albania looked like, so apparating there at all would prove fruitless. Draco apologized that all of Albania that he had seen was his relative's house, and seeing that he was dead... Well, you get the picture. After realizing the problems with getting there by magic means, they decided that it would be simpler to go about it the muggle way. Which meant they needed passports, for which they needed Draco's creativity in names, Hermione's knowledge of muggle documentation and Ron's ability to make fake documentation(a skill that Fred and George had helped him develop). Oh well, until the fakes were made, they were stuck living on a beach in Northeastern Spain, which was the only place they had been able to apparate to.

It had been nearly two weeks since they set off when Ron finally announced that he had finished the passports and had passed Hermione's inspection. Draco seemed proud to say he had thought up everything, including the story, "We're all about to go into college and are traveling around Europe before we have to split up to go to different colleges and-

"What the hell, Draco," Vaughn said staring at her passport, not caring that she was cutting him off mid sentence, "Of all the names you could have possibly picked!"

"What? Lynn is a perfectly respectable name." Draco argued.

"My parents thought so too, which is why that's my sister's name." Vaughn practically growled, "Besides, Lynn Dawe is a commonplace name."

“I apologize for giving you your sister’s name, but the common name is okay because we’re trying to blend in, not stand out.” Draco rolled his eyes and glared at a tourist staring at them, who promptly took a picture and ran, “Any more complaints?”

“...” Was the agonized noise that came from Wolf, who at this point looked more like a mortified statue than a living person. Vaughn shot a death glare at Draco and took Wolf’s fake passport to see what damage Draco had done, and her reaction was quick.

“YOU BLOODY IMBUSIL!” She yelled, kicking him in the shin to emphasize her point.

Draco grimaced in pain, “What did I do now?”

“The surname Bradley he could deal with, but Vernon Bradley? His Uncle’s name is Vernon.”

Draco paled as he realized what he had done, but Wolf sighed, “Don’t worry, I’ll get by just fine with it. Out of curiosity, what names did you three get?”

“Sara Andrews,” Hermione said in a tone that made it obvious that she was somewhat partial to the name.

“Joseph Pratt.” Ron said blatantly glaring at Draco because of the last name.

“Andrew Palin.” Draco said, obviously oblivious to Ron’s animosity.

Wolf sighed heavily, “Let’s just go to Albania and get this whole name game over with.”

Alius Positus

Ginevra Weasley was never one to be nervous, bravery in fact was one of her finest traits. However, no matter how brave a person is, admitting you were wrong is no easy task, and no one noticing that she was in the doorway to the Burrow’s kitchen for a few minutes



wore on her nerves. Moody saw her first, and upon her current disposition, brought Molly's attention to her quickly. Ginny eyes were red and watery from crying, and seemed to be trying to keep herself from bursting into tears without much avail. Molly wasn't quite sure how to handle this without knowing what was wrong, besides, none of her children were big on crying. In a calm tone she said, "I thought you had planned to be with Viktor all Summer."

A single tear rolled down her face, "Is Ron here?"

"No, not for two weeks, why?" Molly was not the only one concerned, Moody, Sirius, McGonagall, Kingsley, Arther and Tonks were present as well.

"I need to tell him that he was right." Ginny said, her voice the only thing about her that wasn't upset, "He told me that I should stay away from Viktor because he'd hurt me, he told me that every day for two years and I could never believe him. But he was right."

In seconds the three women in the room had her sitting in a chair and were trying to comfort her while the men were either amazed at how they had done that so fast or still trying to interpret what Ginny had said. Ginny however, was out of it, because she wasn't at all bothered that one of her teachers was currently giving her a hug(Which from personal experience, I know is bizarre when you don't know the teacher well and aren't expecting it). Tonks was holding her hand, but she may as well have been touching a ghost, meanwhile, Molly asked what Krum had done to her.

"He made me believe he actually cared about me, when I was just a toy to him. Someone to mess with until his betrothed was old enough to marry him," Her silent tears were falling freely, "Why do I keep falling in love with boys who have already met their true love?"

Everyone jumped slightly as Molly spoke their minds, "Keep? As in this isn't the first time?"

"There was one other, Harry," She averted her eyes in reverence of his death, "He was a lot easier on me though, he let me know from

the start he was only interested in being my friend. Unlike some jerk who thought it necessary to make me believe he loved me and then tell me it was all a joke.”

### The Next Day, In the News

Last night, world famous Seeker, Viktor Krum, age twenty, was found beat to death in an alley near the Quidditch World Cup Stadium. Tomorrow the World Cup was scheduled to take place, but in lights of the recent events, it has been canceled. The Department of Magical Law Enforcement arrived on the scene and found the possibility of five killers, all brothers. When they all confessed to doing it together they were asked why, Percival Weasley answered, “He hurt our sister. Do you have a problem with that?” They will all serve one month in jail and be released.

-Lydia Banks, The Daily Prophet

### Tempus Praeter

Eight hours can be trying on a plane, and after that long Wolf was extremely surprised that they all made it off alive. What had amazed him was how Ron and Draco could fight over three other people, and that Vaughn could sleep through it all. Wolf wasn't about to complain though, he was content to have her use his shoulder as a pillow as he tried to ignore the two boys fight about everything from politics to the correct pronunciation of caramel. Thankfully, nothing too out of the ordinary came up in conversation other than a few interesting insults that the three other people on the plane who spoke English did their best ignore. Hermione rolled her eyes after about five minutes and began reading. When it seemed that this torture would never end, the plane landed in Tirane, Albania's Capital.

When they finally passed through customs and stood on the sidewalk next to a two lane road that went to the city, and nowhere else. Draco suggested they go to town, and asked a man at the airport for a ride in Albanian. Draco looked unsure when he came back, “I'm a bit rusty on my Albanian, but I think he just called me an ass.”

The man returned and beckoned the six of them to come with him, all hopeful that Draco hadn't messed it up too badly. They all let out a sigh of relief when they saw the donkeys, and Draco payed. It was an hour ride into town, where they had a hot meal and discussed where to go next. Draco laughed, "You guys haven't heard of the legend of Ravenclaw?"

"You may not have noticed, but along with all of our families, we're all Gryffindors." Ron said.

"Well, the only reason I know about it is because of the old Slytherin tales." Draco smirked, proud to have an audience, "Rowena Ravenclaw was originally from Albania, and spent a lot of time there after she had her daughter, who surpassed her mother in beauty, but was lacking in the brains department. She lived for years envying her mother until she reached her twenties. She was being courted by a Slytherin, which is why we know the story. She always claimed that if only she could have the diadem, she would be as smart as her mother. So when the diadem went missing, Rowena and the Slytherin knew who had it, but Rowena swore him to secrecy. She never admitted to having it stolen, even to the other founders. It was then that Rowena fell ill, and asked the Slytherin to find and bring her her daughter, fair Helena. He tracked her to the forest North of Tirane, where she refused to go with him. His temper got to him and he killed her, and realizing what he'd done, he killed himself. Legend says the diadem was magically concealed in the forest."

It was silent for a mere second before Hermione snorted, "Right, we're supposed to believe you when you tell us a story when the only people that were there died."

"You know they Grey Lady?" Draco asked, they all nodded when the fair ghost of Ravenclaw was mentioned, "That's Helena Ravenclaw."

"And she told the Slytherin house?" Vaughn rolled her eyes, "I believe that as much I would believe Tom being a Hufflepuff."

They were silent as they each tried to imagine Tom being a young happy Hufflepuff, especially because the long lived tradition was to constantly hug your peers. Draco shook the image from his head, "Not exactly, the Slytherin suitor was a man by the name of The Baron Szecht Marris, known in the afterlife as the Bloody Baron."

"And he told you?" Wolf asked.

"Not me," Draco admitted, "It was something like my grandfather's bestfriend's brother-in-law's mother. Or was it his mother-in-law?"

"Frankly, I couldn't care less," Ron said with a sigh, "So does this mean that we're heading North?"

"I suppose, but how will we know where the diadem is concealed?" Hermione asked.

"I'll should be able to find it." Wolf said quietly, "I found out recently that I have an aptitude for finding magical signatures. It shouldn't be a problem for me to find where and how Helena concealed the diadem."

Tempus Praeter

"Master, you asked for my presence?" Snape said, with a coldness that even Voldemort could tell was strange.

Voldemort took note of his behavior, but said nothing of it, "I have found you your new Dark Arts teacher and a replacement Muggle Studies teacher."

Snape shifted, as if unsure, "Dark Arts, do you mean that there won't be a..."

Voldemort smiled, Severus was a good spy, but at times he wondered whether pretending to share their beliefs leaked into what he actually believed. No matter, "There will be no defense, and as a new policy, those who misbehave will be... lab rats of a sort for the

Dark Arts classes. I believe this will be far more effective than the detentions, it will give the students a sense of fear.”

Snape shivered, but gave a smile to hide the pain he was feeling inside. Torture students? Everything in him told him that this was wrong... Maybe he should reveal his true loyalties, let Voldemort kill him, anything would be better than being a part of this. Yet something stopped him, “That is a wonderful plan, master.” He lied, something that years of experience had made him an expert on.

Voldemort’s slightly changed posture gave away the fact that he was pleased, “Than may I introduce your new teachers, Amycus and his twin sister Alecko.”

Snape looked at the two figures. They were menacing, twin smiles of evil, the expression of people who thrived on torture. His heart fell, he knew that he was a generally hated teacher, but he had limits. These two would rip Hogwarts apart, and there was nothing he could do.

Nothing anyone could do.

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(A/N: I killed Krum, and I’m proud of it! For those of you who like Krum, I apologize, but I don’t mean it. For those of you that pity Ginny, I will eventually give her a relationship that works out, I’m just not sure who it’s with it. Please Review!)

“Hello, Earth to Wolf

“Hello, Earth to Wolf!” Vaughn called waving her hand two inches from her boyfriend's face that had been in a trance for the past five minutes. They had spent the last four days wandering behind him as he touched every tree. Every, single, tree. Then, in the middle of reaching out for the next tree, he just froze without warning. He had touched the trunk of the tree experimentally before his hand returned to his side, and his eyes grew far away. Annoyed, Vaughn resorted to something she hadn't done since Wolf stopped having nightmares and daydreams about the Dursleys, she smacked him in the back of the head.

He snapped out of it, gingerly rubbing his head, “What was that for?”

“The sake of our sanities.” Vaughn replied dryly before adding, “You stared at that tree for five minutes as if it had the meaning of life written out on its trunk with an English title but was written in German. What's wrong?”

Wolf dropped his gaze to the ground and sighed, “It's right here.”

“Harry, that's great. I didn't think we'd find the dia- thingy that fast.” Ron said, but was stopped by an hateful glare from Wolf, “What?”

“I didn't say anything about the diadem.” Wolf said, and everyone blanched, “This is where Helena hid the diadem, I can feel her magical signature. And Tom's.”

“So what's wrong?” Hermione asked.

“He removed the diadem, but... he left with it and never bothered bringing it back.” Wolf said, “It's not here and hasn't been for a long time. After Tom was in Albania he went back to Hogwarts and asked for the Defense position. Dumbledore refused. And then either on his way to Dumbledore's office or while he was leaving, he hid it.”

“If the horcrux is at Hogwarts, and there isn't one here, then where's the cup?” Vaughn asked, first to recover from the bad news.

Wolf smiled so weakly that you could barely call it a smile, "Well, that does seem to be the question, doesn't it?"

"So were back at square one?" Draco asked leaning against a tree, and Ron sat at the base of the next tree over.

"Well, we know there isn't one in Albania." Wolf said feigning happiness, but soon he frowned and said, "Who am I kidding?"

"So what do we do now?" Hermione asked, not used to the lack of preparedness. It wasn't like them to not know what was going on, not be three steps ahead or already have it taken care of.

"Wait, think, try not to think about the hell hole the real world is in." Wolf said bitterly, "Hope that when this is all over we have a family to go back to."

Tempus Praeter

This just feels wrong, so wrong. Ginny thought as she sat down next to Neville at the Gryffindor table in the Great Hall, while carefully avoiding the eyes of everyone who had heard about how her brothers had killed the world's best Seeker. She was bitterly happy, sad that he was only with her as a joke, but happy that he had gotten what was coming to him. She looked up at the staff table, only two people were smiling, but not in a way that made you feel okay being around them. Snape sat in Dumbledore's chair impassively scanning the students, his eyes falling on every member of the SET, and when he reached Ginny she could see that he was silently apologizing. If she wasn't already creeped out by the grinning twins, that would have had her convinced. Then there was the disconcerting Sorting hat song:

The time will come to show where your loyalty lies,

When the houses will no longer separate us,

Everyone must choose their own path,

Everyone must accept the consequences thereof,

None can escape their Fate,

Whether Brave descendants of Godric,

The Wise scions of Rowena,

The accepting legacy of Helga,

Or Cunning heirs of Salazar,

This year will bring you together,

Or tear the World apart.

It was silent afterwards, no one could ever remember the song being so short, straight forward or to the point. And no one could forget the words. The first years were quickly sorted, and it was time for the Headmaster to make his annual speech. Snape stood confidently, "Welcome," He said darkly, "As a reminder, the Forbidden forest is... forbidden... to all."

Ginny couldn't help but smile, was Snape making a joke? He continued as if he didn't hear the snickers, "And there is an ever growing list of banned items on our caretaker Filch's door. I would now like to introduce our new muggle studies teacher, Miss Alecko Carrow." There was no applause for the frightening looking lady, "And her brother, Amycus Carrow, will be taking over the Defense Against the Dark Arts position. Also, he will from now on be the head of discipline for the school." The room was perfectly silent. Snape let out an inaudible sigh, "Let the feast begin."

Ginny had lost her appetite, the Carrows looked like they would Avada Kadavra you for speaking out in class. She ate a little, but mostly pushed her food around her plate until a note materialized next to her in a thick envelope. It was addressed to both she and Neville. She furrowed her brow trying to recognize the familiar handwriting, that's when it clicked: Snape. She tapped Neville's



shoulder and took the note and thick piece of paper that was folded numerous times and they silently read the note:

Longbottom and Weasley,

I would like you to meet me in my office(Dumbledore's old one) at half past midnight. The password is 'pureblood'. This map should help as long as you solemnly swear that you are up to no good.

-Severus Snape

Ginny and Neville's eyes met, despite the fact that this was suspicious, they agreed to go. After all, Harry believed that Snape had always been on our side, and the look in his eyes attested to that. Ginny took one look at the other piece of paper, it was the Marauder's Map. How it had come to be in Snape's possession was beyond her, but she recognized how great a gift she had received. Maybe there was hope.

Tempus Praeter

Ginny took Neville's hand as they left the common room with fifteen minutes to reach their destination. With a great deal of help from the map they were able to navigate to Snape's office without getting caught, Mrs. Norris saw them, but even the cat seemed to realize that things had changed and stayed silent. They finally reached the gargoyle and gave it the password, instead of jumping aside it just kind of moped away. The two continued on and after taking a deep breath, they knocked on the door to Snape's office, but rather than hearing them bid him to enter, he opened the door and motioned them in, then to a pair of chairs laid out for the occasion. Then Snape sat down and it was deathly quiet.

"Do you trust me?" Snape sighed, looking at them for an answer.

Ginny looked at Neville, who nodded barely enough for her to see. She then turned her gaze to the Headmaster, "Harry trusted you, and we don't doubt his judgment."

“Then I would like to ask you two a favor,” Snape said, his lips pursed together, he was nervous, “I want you two to restart the SET.”

“What?” Neville yelled before Ginny could even react, “You want us to create an army?”

“Not precisely, I want them to be able to protect themselves. He’s replacing Defense with a Dark Arts class.”

“He? You mean, Tom?” Ginny asked, Snape nodded sadly, “Before agreeing to anything, I want to know how you got the map.”

“That Vaughn girl may have been a wreck, but she still trusted me,” Snape began, “She gave it to me, told me how to use it and told me to keep it until the time was right. I think this is what she meant.”

Ginny nodded to Neville, who said, “Okay, we’ll do it.”

“Thank you,” He pulled a piece of parchment from his pocket, “These are the willing Slytherins, the ones against deatheaters. They will join your cause.”

“Bring us together or tear us apart.” Ginny repeated and looked over the list, four names standing out, “Blaise Zabini, Pansy Parkinson, Vincent Crabbe and Gregory Goyle?”

“They are very upset about their friends death and think that following their parents’ plan will give them the same fate. They’re planning their futures, something that hasn’t been seen in a long time in Slytherin,” Snape said, “They also want to redeem their house.”

“House ties don’t matter.” Neville said quietly, “After all, Peter Pettigrew was a Gryffindor.”

Tempus Praeter

Twenty-nine Gryffindors, twenty-four Raveclaws, nineteen Hufflepuffs and seven Slytherins, seventy-nine members in all. Ginny, Neville and Luna were in charge of the SET now, but it was barely like it had

been in the old days. The loss of Harry's natural teaching abilities had done some damage, but they got by just fine, every student up to par with the members of the Order of the Phoenix. The only trouble they had had was on the day of the first meeting, when the other houses were yelling at the Slytherins for being in their midst. Luna was the one to speak up for them, "You forget that they lost their best friends to You-Know-Who, we're all here for the same reason. Why should their house colors matter?"

Strangely enough, though Ginny was the youngest of those in charge, the students came to her more often. She was the best teacher of the three and it was her pendant that was the lead one, and she scheduled the meetings. And, she was also the one that detention in Carrow's class most often because she often refused to perform dark spells. As a result, she always had a few bruises and was impervious to the imperious curse and had grown use to amateur cruciatus curses. However, what bothered Carrow most was her silence, she never said a word or cried out during the cruel punishments, she just stared ahead with glazed over eyes. Thus, she was named Queen of Pain.

It was late October when the title was made official, a fourth year had been seen with a copy of the Quibbler, which had been banned for it's views against You-Know-Who and was on the seventh floor trying to hide when he found an unfamiliar door. The room was filled with shelf upon shelf of random items that he ran far into in his adrenaline rush. While finding his way out he stumbled upon a small crown. The next meeting it was presented to her, and from then on she wore it everyday, to the chagrin of her new teachers.

Everyone has to have their limits though, and by winter break she was living in the Room of Requirement, leaving only with the Marauders Map to do things to prove that the SET was still fighting. Various walls held the messages of the SET that she had left, and she had the pride of having You-Know-Who himself coming to examine the messages that Flitwick claimed he couldn't remove.

In the Entrance Hall: Harry is gone, but the SET remains.

In the Third Floor corridor: SET still recruiting.

On the second Floor by the girl's bathroom: Slytherin heir beware.

And, the SET's personal favorite: As long as the SET remains, You-Know-Who cannot prevail.

This particular passage was written on the wall of the Dark Arts classroom. Flitwick could have taken it off in minutes, but he hadn't. And other than the Carrows, there were no complaints, because Weasley is their Queen.

*Alius Positus*

It had been a stressful few months, everyone trying to figure out where the cup might be, and would suggest something just as Wolf would come up with something very plausible. Of course, whatever idea he had previously come up with would disappear into the far reaches of his mind. As this had happened on a regular basis, it wasn't until three days after Halloween that much progress was made. They were currently hiding out in the Swiss Alps at a closed ski resort that Ron had traveled to when he was eight and had broken his arm. Wolf had found it easier to concentrate in the quiet of the high altitudes and would stay up there for over ten hours a day, but he finally came down mid morning, sliding down the slippery slope.

He made a beeline for Draco, "Okay, I think I've thought about something that's very possible. Draco, how well was your father trusted in the first war?"

"How well was he trusted? Immensely." Draco replied, "His innermost circle consisted of five people and my father was one of them."

"Perfect, who were the others?"

"Let's see, there was him, Rodolphus Lestranger, Regulus Black, Andrew Incendin, and Camilo Drysen, but the last three all died in the war." Draco listed off, "How exactly is this helpful?"

“Tom trusted his diary to one of his most faithful, I think he would have given the cup to someone equally faithful. Not Black, he was too young, Drysen isn’t a well known family, the Incidents were vampires...” Wolf got a peculiar look on his face, “Which leads to Rodolphus...”

“Harry?” Hermione said, “I don’t like the look on your face, you always get that look on your face before you do or suggest something really stupid.”

“Oh trust me, it’s stupid,” He said, proud as ever for that particular fact, “Who’s up for doing illegal stuff?”

They all paled at the excited tone in his voice, except Vaughn, “Ooh, what kind of illegal stuff?”

“Let’s see, impersonation, stealing, you will be doing underage wizardry, and some dark magic will be involved.” Wolf said, then caught the glares of the other three, “What? How else would you plan to break into Gringotts?”

“You want us to break into Gringotts, go to the vault of one of the oldest wizarding families, steal the cup and attempt to get out alive?” Hermione asked, just to make sure she was clear on what was being asked of them.

“Yep,” Wolf nodded, as if breaking the law was just as normal as breathing, “You guys will help me, won’t you?”

“Sure, sounds like fun, unless we get killed.” Draco said.

Vaughn smiled, “Ah, of course, I was missing blatantly disregarding the rules and getting away with it.”

“I’m not going to let him get all the credit,” Ron said glaring at Draco.

Hermione sighed, “I guess I’m up for, if to do nothing else than to stop you from doing anything too stupid.”

“Okay, here's the plan...”

Tempus Praeter

December 21, 1997 in Diagon Alley

“Remind me again how Harry roped us into doing this?”

“We volunteered, remember?” Hermione said, carefully scanning the semi-busy streets of Diagon Alley, momentarily meeting Harry and Vaughn's eyes before going back to her job. Looking for death eaters.

“Yeah, well I still can't believe that Harry calls picking a fight with death eaters is a so called 'safe job'.”

“Would you rather face unknown dangers, or Avery, Dolohov and Goyle?”

“Dangers with a name any day, just keep in mind that mum is here too.” Ron said eyeing her, Ginny, Arthur and several other members in the Order. That, if anything, was an asset. See, their knowledge of Rodolphus' personality was sketchy at best. Ron and Hermione's job was to distract any death eaters long enough to get the other three into Gringotts, which would only take a couple minutes. Things were about to get... interesting.

Finally Harry gave them a nod before he and Vaughn disappeared under the invisibility cloak to go get Draco, who had been disguised as the widowed Lestrage. Hermione and Ron summed up the Gryffindor courage that they were so famous for and stepped into the middle of the street in front of the death eaters in a challenging way. At first the three of them were surprised, but the emotion quickly turned sour, Avery smiled in a sadistic manner, “Out of our way or you'll regret it.”

“Go ahead,” Ron urged, just as the members of the Order caught sight of them, Molly letting out a gasp of terror.

The three death eaters paused, used to everyone fearing them not... urging them into a fight. Frankly, they were confused by the behavior of the two. Hermione snorted, "What wrong, you don't think you can win a duel with two children?"

All confusion among the Dark Lord's followers was lost as they pulled out their wands, but Ron and Hermione already had their wands out. Molly, Ginny and Arthur all moved to help the couple, but were held back by Kingsley, Moody and Sirius. The latter of which spoke, "Don't worry, they can more than handle this, besides, there's something more going on here."

Sure enough, less than four minutes later, Hermione and Ron were standing over the unconscious bodies of the three death eaters. Their work almost done, they quickly levitated Dolohov and Goyle to the end of the alley, and Hermione pinned a small note to Avery before they disposed of him similarly. Ron and Hermione shared a somewhat relieved look, their part of this mission had been completed flawlessly, now it was all up to the other three. But the plans of this group always tended to have a rough side, and the rough side of this plan had red hair, a bad temper, and very motherly instincts.

"Ronald Weasley!" Was the call that made Ron go rigid, he had really hoped that she had missed the scene, but no such luck. Within a second he had been captured in a suffocating hug from his mother, and Hermione was subjected to the same soon afterwards. The other members of the small group greeted the two as well, but Molly Weasley's kindness soon relented so she could show how upset she was, "Where have you two been? You at least could have given us a proper good-bye! Didn't even tell us where you were going... If you two were even a little worse at dueling I would also be upset that you refused an offer for an adult to go with you!"

Hermione and Ron shared a look, unsure whether the last statement was to be taken as a compliment or not, and they finally muttered a quiet, "Thanks...?"

“Well, I see no reason why we should stand here in the streets, I’m sure the twins would be glad to see you now that they’re out of Azkaban.” Molly said, immediately regretting that she had added that last part.

“They were in Azkaban? I thought they only got in trouble because they liked bothering the teachers.” Ron said.

“Actually, Bill, Percy and Charlie were in jail too... for murder.” Ginny supplied, blushing fervently, and when Ron raised an eyebrow she added, “Turns out you were right about Krum.”

Ron looked pissed, “The one time I would have proper reason to beat up someone on your behalf I’m off doing... other things... Just my luck.”

While Ron was easily able to mix back into family conversation, Hermione was still thinking about the note Harry had made them leave. She still wasn’t sure he knew how much a risk he was putting them at by choosing the words he did, but he was sure that they were common enough words that Tom wouldn’t think much of it.

Dear the ‘Dark Lord’,

We aren’t afraid of you. We’re still fighting, and you can’t find us.

You can’t win.

Try to find us, kill us, weed out those that rebel against your ‘noble’ cause.

Bring it, Tom

-Yours Sincerely, the Rebellion

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(A/N: And on that note, we end the chapter. Wolf is being a bit reckless, but he wants Voldemort to begin realizing something’s



wrong. WARNING: The next chapter has Wolf and Vaughn doing some fairly unpleasant spells, most of them really dark. Please Review!)

Wolf threw the Invisibility Cloak over him and Vaughn, taking her hand as they quickly weaved their way towards the alley next

Wolf threw the Invisibility Cloak over him and Vaughn, taking her hand as they quickly weaved their way towards the alley next to Gringotts where they found Draco that through expression, posture and looks mimicked Rodolphus Lestrage exactly. Vaughn put her hand softly on Draco's shoulder so he would know where they were at all times. As soon as he felt her hand they began moving towards the entrance and Vaughn and Wolf's wands were drawn, knowing they were going to have to use illegal magic to do their deed. Draco walked through the door to Gringotts, opening the door far wider than need be so his two helpers could pass through, but he passed it off as his feeling of superiority over everyone else. Being raised by death eaters Draco had worked on his acting skills often, and fit his part beautifully, not even hesitating to pretend to cough impatiently to get the goblin's attention, who in turn replied, "May I help you?"

Draco snorted indignantly, "I would like to make a withdrawal my vault."

Griphook gave Draco a look that implied that he was not to pleased with the wizards these days that were so impolite, but he called over another goblin, "This is Ragton, he will take you to your vault." He gave Ragton a look that could be interpreted as sympathy.

Ragton led Draco to the cart, Draco took care to take his time showing his disgust at the small dirty cart that gave Wolf and Vaughn time to shuffle really close to the opposite side of the cart. As Draco was barely seated Ragton began moving the cart and apologized to Draco, even though it was painfully obvious that the action had been purposeful. Draco caught it and muttered to himself darkly about why his master would let such repugnant creatures live, Ragton heard him and stiffened. After what seemed like far too long of a ride, Ragton stopped the cart very quickly, nearly launching it's occupants from the cart.

Of course, at what they saw now, Vaughn and Wolf felt bad that Draco was supposed to act like he'd seen this many times before. A huge pale dragon with it's wings tied down to it's body, and at their

arrival it opened glazed eyes that showed the creature was blind and roared loudly. Vaughn felt Harry freeze, but wasn't sure of the reason for his behavior, and was soon consumed by a vision, that was thankfully short. Ragton turned to Draco, "You do have the Lestrangle Torc, the proof that you are in fact a Lestrangle and not an... imposter."

It was Draco who now froze, and Ragton's eyes narrowed knowing that Draco was now an imposter, but Wolf quickly imperiused him. Wolf threw the invisibility cloak off of them and practically ran to the dragon and stopped when he was just a few feet from the beast and made a loud hissing noise. Hello?

The dragon seemed confused, You speak like a snake.

You speak like a goddess, I've never had the pleasure of hearing one who brought such beauty to the language.

Draco and Vaughn were now sufficiently creeped out, the Dragon was smiling, Well, what a charming young man. What brings you down here?

We're trying to save the world, but I think I could help you get out of this place.

Out? The dragon looked shocked, As in, outside?

You've never been outside, have you?

No, but your offer is tempting. I have been down here for many many years, betrayed as a hatchling by Salazar...

Salazar Slytherin?

Yes, cunning boy, sweet talked me into a lifetime of slavery.

I'm getting you out of here, no one deserves to be locked up for so long. Wolf said to her and moved in an annoyed fashion over to Vaughn and softly asked, "What was your vision?"

“We’re going to have to save Hermione and Ron from part of the Order. They’re in the twin’s joke shop.” Vaughn replied, “What’s with the dragon?”

“The dragon-“ Wolf began, but was cut off by the dragon.

My name is Firesong, and yours?

Wolf, the other boy is Draco, but he is disguised, and the girl is Vaughn. Wolf switched back to English as he heard Firesong complain about not being able to see his companions, “Her name is Firesong, and we’re going to escape with her. Salazar tricked her into a life of servitude.”

Draco did a quick calculation, “That’s just wrong, but Harry, we do need to get this over with.”

Wolf got the goblin to open the door to the Lestrangle’s vault while Vaughn and Draco began releasing the dragon, Vaughn laughing all the while. Draco asked what she could possibly find so funny about the situation, and she was happy to answer, “Of all the creature rights there are to fight for, my boyfriend chooses dragons. And we thought Hermione was crazy when she was fighting for house elf rights.”

Wolf was walking into the Lestrangle’s vault and immediately saw the cup of Hufflepuff on a rather large stack of gold. He smirked, this was too easy. He reached for the cup, but accidentally brushed a piece of gold that spat burning gold at him. Wolf cursed quietly, wishing for once that Tom’s followers were as stupid as they were made out to be. Now he just had to find a way to get the cup that was taunting him from the top of the pile without touching anything else. He smiled and performed a shaky handstand while quickly saying, “Solum Caelum Mutatio,”

He almost fell over when the spell pulled him towards the ceiling so he was now crouching. This was one of the spells he had learned courtesy of the half-blood prince, although it was meant to be used on someone else. The entire point of the spell was to change the direction of gravity for a period of time, but the effects had only

worked on humans and toads, though the reason why was beyond the stretch of both Snape and Wolf's minds. Wolf stood up slowly, unsure of the spell, but was able to easily take a couple steps and reach up(or would it be down?) to get the cup. He then walked over to the doorway and tried to do another handstand while performing the spell again, but he had reached his extent of doing handstands for one day.

Wolf hit the ground on his side with a thump, earning a stare from his two companions and a mostly blind dragon. Vaughn rolled her eyes and broke the last cord that was keeping Firesong tied to the cold floor, and said darkly, "Can you go anywhere without falling?"

"I think that I would prefer to not answer that question," Wolf answered as he pulled himself to his feet, wondering if he would have any bruises, "I'm fine by the way, not like either of you care enough to ask."

Vaughn was about to argue with him when she saw that he was joking around, "Just curious, what do you plan to do with the goblin?"

"This," Wolf said, then obliterated the goblin, "He'll wake up down here and won't remember anything that happened, and while we were up there I took care of the head goblin. No one will know that this happened, especially Tom. Though, now I will be making some more taunting notes, to try to get him a bit more out in the open, and with his pet. Everyone ready to go?"

After a long discussion that Wolf had to translate, Vaughn and Draco stood on Firesong's shoulders and cleared a tunnel for the dragon to fly through in order to get out. Wolf was standing on her tail, precariously balanced, as he reclosed the tunnel so no one would be able to tell how they had gotten out. Once outside in the bright sun, Firesong landed and let her three passengers off. Vaughn stayed with Firesong while Draco and Wolf went to go get Hermione and Ron.

Alius Positus

"Come on, mum," One of the twins said rolling his eyes.

“It’s product advertisement.” The other twin finished.

“I don’t care,” Molly Weasley replied, “It’s not decent to write ‘U-No-Poo’ on the side of the building, and will you all stop laughing, you’re only encouraging them.”

No one really stopped laughing, but started doing it in a less noticeable way. One of the twins(who from now on we’ll call Forge, because that’s what his nametag says) sighed, “So we’re not allowed to be encouraged, but your fine with everyone at school calling Ginny their Queen?”

“Since when have they been calling Ginny their Queen?” Ron asked; it had been years since he had been the last of his brothers to know what was going on in Ginny’s life.

“Since one of the kids at school found this and I was crowned.” Ginny said taking off a thin circlet that she had hidden under her hair.

Hermione noticeably froze when she recognized it as the diadem of Ravenclaw, how had some random person found what Tom had hidden so many years ago? She shook it off, it wasn’t all that important at the moment, “Ginny, can I see that?”

Ginny complied and handed it to Hermione who found what she was looking for after a quick examination and showed it to Ron. His eyes widened as he read aloud, “Wit beyond measure is a man’s greatest treasure.”

Ginny looked at in realization, remembering what was named off as horcruxes, “You’re kidding, that can’t be the real one.” Everyone else was confused as Hermione confirmed that it was, Ginny pursed her lips, “Keep it, I don’t want to be the holder of the diadem of Ravenclaw.”

“What’s wrong with having the diadem? Do you just not want something belonging to a different house?” Sirius asked, though everyone’s interest was peaked.

Ginny shook her head, thinking quickly, "I wouldn't a problem with the thing if it wasn't cursed, why do you think Rowena Ravenclaw disappeared in her final days? The curse is what killed her."

The stories of how Ravenclaw had died were many and varied, so it was not too far of a stretch to think it was a possibility. Ron smiled internally at his sister's story, and he played along, "We'll take it somewhere where it won't have the chance to hurt anyone. But you can't really go back to school without it... Hermione?"

Hermione was already digging through her pockets where she found a spoon and seemed pleased as she then dug out her wand, ignoring the inquiring looks. As she transfigured the spoon she calmly said, "I wouldn't laugh if I were you, you never know when you might need something like this." She held an almost exact copy of the diadem now, only different enough that it couldn't be mistaken for the diadem. Ginny accepted it with a smile, but was still tempted to ask how many horcruxes were left after that, but her chances of getting to ask was slim to none.

Molly sighed, "So, will you two be leaving us again?"

It was silent, this was the exact reason why he didn't want to be found by his parents, "We aren't done with what we're doing. Though we hope to be done soon."

"I assure you, you won't have the chance." A voice from the door spoke, Rodolfus was smirking with a couple dozen death eaters in their white masks and black cloaks standing behind him, "I'm afraid the Dark Lord hasn't taken kindly to your interference."

The death eaters permeated the room, at least one wand pointed at everyone, and Ron quickly tried to get to Hermione, but with one word from the enemy he was writhing in pain on the floor. Everyone watched in horror as the spell was held on him, after a couple seconds it was lifted and Ron slumped to the floor. The death eater yanked him off the floor and in a deep voice he said, "Compared to what the Dark Lord will do to you, this is nothing."

Hermione and Ron were apparated from the joke shop, and the other death eaters followed quickly. No one had been ready for the two to leave so soon, and they were all frightened for what the Dark Lord had in store for them. More importantly, what had they done to earn his wrath? The twins were quickly caught in their mother's arms because she was so upset, just as everyone was. What if they were killed, the mission they were on hadn't been passed on to anyone, maybe there wasn't hope.

In the chaos, no one noticed that the death eater who had incapacitated Ginny had handed her a note, and for the moment she was pretending to be in shock when really she was dreading reading whatever was on that piece of paper. She moved away from everyone else and hid a few aisles away where she could have privacy because something told her that this was for her alone. She opened the note and read the words slowly:

Ginny,

We're fine, it more than just Ron and Hermione. We're all fighting, and we're proud of what you're doing. We've done some research about your actions at Hogwarts, and we'd like you to leave another message for our dear friend Tom on the date specified below, not before then.

April 23, preferably in the Great Hall or somewhere that can't be missed:

When was the last time you saw the Snake's locket?

Memorize this and burn this as soon as you can. We will see you not long after the date above, make sure the Order knows.

-The Rebellion

Ginny paled, the writing... it couldn't be... but it had to be. Harry's, but he was dead. She read it again, then a third time. Every letter, every stroke of the quill, it was his, which meant...

He's alive.



She already had committed the phrase to memory and she burned the note with new found determination. Harry was alive, who knows, maybe Draco and Vaughn were too. Somehow he had failed to die, again. She didn't know why he was making her wait so long, but there were so few times that Harry's plans had gone wrong that she knew that she had to do this. For the off chance he was still alive and running the show.

Alius Positus

"Bloody Hell, Harry, why'd you have to do that?" Ron said aching in pain from the crucio. Now walking into a forest near London that the tunnel that had been made on the way out of Gringotts had come out.

All the death eaters melted back into one person who casually took off his mask, showing that he was actually Wolf, "I had to make it real, if you hadn't tried to save Hermione, I wouldn't have had to do it."

"So what do we do now?" Hermione said, afraid that the reply would involve similar answers to the last questions.

Wolf hesitated, "We have a... friend to introduce you to. Just around the corner to be exact."

The hesitation in his voice was less than comforting, and Hermione and Ron's fear were only confirmed when they saw the huge dragon around the corner. It took a minute for either of them to regain the ability to speak, Hermione slowly asked, "Is that an actual dragon?"

"Nope," Vaughn said from her perch on Firesong's neck, "It's a pretend dragon that just happens to be extremely realistic. You should see the fake fire."

"Where'd you get that... thing?" Ron said, the closest he'd ever been to a dragon before was the first task of the Triwizard Tournament, and that was at least from twice as far as he was now.

The dragon growled, and Wolf rolled his eyes, "She's not a thing Ron, and she doesn't appreciate being called such. I suggest you either call her she or Firesong. As for where we got her, we found her at Gringotts."

Draco had begun to deconstruct the charms making him look like Rodolfus Lestrage, and watched Hermione and Ron interact with Firesong with amusement. When he was done Wolf set the cup of Hufflepuff on a stump near Draco and he offered him the sword of Gryffindor. Draco just stared at it, "Harry, what are you doing?"

"I'm asking you to destroy the horcrux," Wolf answered, "After all, you did a wonderful job acting today, and you deserve your turn to destroy one."

"But that sword, it belongs to Gryffindor, and I'm a Slytherin..." Draco replied, that was the one thing that bothered him, no matter what, he would always be labeled as a Slytherin.

Wolf sighed, "For all intents and purposes, you are an honorary Gryffindor, now destroy the horcrux."

Draco hesitated, wondering if being a Slytherin would cause any adverse affects, but he gently grabbed the sword anyway. To his relief, it was if he had grabbed any other sword, and he faced the cup, and brought the sword down on it. The cup was split almost perfectly in half about halfway down the stem, and Wolf relaxed, as if he could sense that the soul was destroyed. He let himself relax into a smile, "Now we just have to find the diadem at Hogwarts without letting people know we're alive."

"Actually, Harry," Hermione said and pulled the diadem from her pocket, "We already have the diadem."

Wolf stared blankly at her, "How did you get that?"

"Someone found it, Ginny was crowned with it, and we made her a copy of it to wear and took the one that was a horcrux." Ron explained. Wolf nodded and motioned for Hermione to destroy it,

though the sword wasn't even considered when it came to Hermione. All of them had practiced with Fiend Fyre, but only Hermione had been able to control the dark fire. She held the diadem in one hand and pointed to it mumbling the incantation under her breath. The circlet burned to a crisp before she spoke the counter curse, then she handed the charred diadem to Wolf.

"Six down, one to go, and we've already started that plan." Wolf said, but noticed that Hermione was looking at him in an accusing manner.

"What exactly is the point of your plan, this time?" She asked, crossing her arms.

"It's rather simple really," Wolf began, "I want to make him lose his sense of reality, his ability to reason, and grasp on sanity, what little grasp he has, that is. Keep in mind this guy is seriously messed up. I'm going to make him delusional, so when Ginny delivers a message in April, he'll take it seriously and we'll have him out in the open. We will win this war."

-

(A/N: Okay, I'm going to start giving rough estimates for how long I'm planning on this being, and right now I'm thinking that it will be about sixty. By the way, if you can think of anything that you would want to say to Voldemort's face if he couldn't hurt you, please leave it in a review, you will get credit for anything I use. Also, ideas for who Ginny should be with are welcome. Please review!)

Vaughn sighed, she hated seeing Wolf like this, he was hallow, empty, vacant, absent, unoccupied, uninhibited, bare, stony, imp

Vaughn sighed, she hated seeing Wolf like this, he was hallow, empty, vacant, absent, unoccupied, uninhibited, bare, stony, impassive, lifeless. Okay, she admittedly needed to stop looking up words in the thesaurus, but the point remained, he seemed dead. Well, technically, that was the whole point. Wolf wanted to taunt Tom, actively make him go insane, but not make him positive that Wolf was alive. His solution, invent a spell that would fit his needs. It had taken him a while to get the spell right, but he had successfully taken legilemency and instead of just sending your mind into another mind, you sent your soul. That way, only Tom would be able to see him in as a ghost. It had been named 'soul walking' by the group, who had decided to call themselves the Rebellion. Wolf had played around with it, showing his friends how it worked, but also explaining that his body would be helpless during his excursions.

Of course, he also had an overly protective female dragon that called him her hatchling watching his body.

No matter how Wolf had tried to assure her that it was fine, Vaughn couldn't stand to look at him when he was away. His eyes lost all of the vibrant green they were known so well for and were a dismal gray. He may as well have gotten the Kiss, but even less human. His breathing was even, as if asleep, but other than the rising and falling of his chest, he was still. Vaughn wasn't the only one with an aversion to watching him while he was gone, Hermione did her best to avoid looking at him by burying herself in the books Wolf had brought to make his spell, Ron worked on a variety of spells at least fifty feet away, and Draco would slowly polish Firesong's pale blue scales until they shone. Vaughn however, couldn't stop herself from staring. It was going to be a long four months.

Alius Positus

January 1, 1998

It was Wolf's very first visit to Tom while he was actually awake and would be allowed to see him. Wolf had wanted to make sure that he

knew his surroundings before strutting around and annoying Tom. Tom was still holding his head quarters at the Malfoy Manor, adding insult to injury on Lucius and Narcissa Malfoy who were still under the impression that their son was dead. Wolf felt bad for them, especially since their mannerisms gave away to everyone that they were less than pleased to be under the control of the Dark Lord. Fear was the only thing that kept them on his side. Wolf shook his head, Tom had to be sick and disturbed to rule through crucios. Then again, Wolf had already known that Tom was sick and disturbed for quite a while.

Wolf's ghost form sat on Tom's bed, rolling his eyes at the all too typical black blanket with a green dark mark on it. On the other side of the bed was a ramp of a sort that went from the floor to the bed, which was for the purpose of helping Nagini get on the bed. After a couple nights, Wolf had found out that Tom never slept without Nagini by his side. He had decided it was cute- in a demented snake obsessive sort of way. Of course, Nagini had no protective charms on her at this point, so once again Wolf was forced to wish that he could kill in this form. It would make everything so much easier.

The door to the room began to open and Wolf waited anxiously as the light was turned on magically as Tom entered the room. He stopped immediately when he saw Wolf waiting patiently on his bed, but Nagini slithered around the bed and coiled herself. Wolf was sure that if Tom's skin wasn't so pale in the first place, he would have paled at the sight. As it was he was searching his brain for the right words to say, but they did eventually come, "What are you doing here?"

Wolf feigned looking around, "Unless I'm mistaken, I'm sitting on your bed and starting a conversation with you. Though I have been known to make mistakes."

Tom's red eyes met me with a glare that would kill, realizing that he had made a poor choice of words to a sarcastic teenage ghost, "Why are you here?"

"Do you really think it's necessary to yell, I'm only a few feet from you." Wolf said, pretending Tom's yells hurt his ears, "As to why I'm here, isn't it a tradition of a sort to haunt the person that killed you?"

“I didn’t kill you, Malfoy did!” Tom said, though the tone he was using suggested that he wished that I hadn’t ‘died’ in the duel.

“Well, Draco’s dead, so I can’t really haunt him. Besides, he did kill me because you ordered him to. Any other questions you would to yell at me?” Wolf asked, loving the fact he was free to bother Tom without any possibility of a bad repercussion.

Tom bared his teeth, “Get OUT!” He yelled, loud enough that they could hear someone walk to the door and hesitate before coming in.

“M- master?” The small voice of Peter Pettigrew asked, “Is something wrong, I heard you yell...”

“Of course something’s wrong!” Tom snapped, “There’s a ghost that refuses to get off my bed.”

Peter stared at the bed, which just made Wolf smile, he was going to enjoy this so much. Peter built up his courage, “Master, it’s just Nagini.”

“What are you talking about Pettigrew? The ghost of Harry bloody Potter is on my bed, are you blind?” Tom was furious when Peter shook his head that he didn’t see the ghost.

“Oh, did I forget to mention that you’re the only one that can see or hear me?” Wolf said grinning. Tom’s head snapped back to Wolf in a deep glare as he processed what he had just heard, then turned back to Peter.

“Out.” He said curtly. Peter was still worried about the Dark Lord who was apparently seeing ghosts that simply didn’t exist. Tom frowned further, “If you treasure your life, you’ll leave now.” Peter knew the threat was serious, so he decided reluctantly to obey his master’s wishes.

“You know, you would have saved yourself a lot of embarrassment if you had given me the chance to explain that you were the only that could see me earlier.” Wolf chided, “Though it is kind of strange that

Peter got here so fast. Is he always such a suck-up? Or is today just a special occasion?"

Tom was blinking in a way that suggested that he was very creeped out by the ghost in front of him, "Why exactly am I the only one that gets the pleasure of your company?"

Wolf almost laughed at his sarcastic remark, "I believe I asked you a question first."

Tom glared at him like a small child used to getting his way suddenly being less important than someone else, "Fine, I'll answer your stupid question. Peter's always a pathetic excuse for a man that will grovel at my feet without discretion. It's annoying and I don't even know why I haven't killed him yet."

"I think it's because you feel grateful to him for restoring your body to you." Tom grimaced as if to say 'you idiot, Dark Lords don't feel grateful towards anyone'. Wolf once again struggled not to laugh at the man, "As for your question, I don't really know why you are the only one that can see me."

Tom glared, "Even in death you're the worst liar known to man."

"Fine, I just don't want to tell you why." Wolf said in a taunting tone, "By the way, can I call you Tommy?"

Wolf was barely keeping in his laughter anymore, Tom's eyes were actually twitching, "You certainly may not call me... Tommy."

"Why not?"

"I am The Dark Lord, I'm supposed to be feared, I will not allow myself to be called Tommy."

"Fine, but I will not go along with all this 'Dark Lord' silliness, it's so unoriginal. I'm going to call you Lord Fish Head."

More twitching ensued, "What in the world would make you come up with a (censored, Voldemort really needs to stop swearing) name like that?"

"It's quite simple really, you don't have a nose... fish don't have noses..." Wolf made a face, "What did happen to your nose? When you got your new body did it decide it didn't want to be evil and run away? Perhaps it didn't want to be on that ugly mask called your face."

"Are you going to annoy me at all hours, or can I get some privacy?" Tom said.

"Oh sorry, who would I be to deprive Lord Fish Head from his much needed beauty sleep." Wolf said disappearing.

January 15

Tom was getting... frustrated. Almost every day he had seen the ghost of his former enemy, who was just as annoying in death as he was alive. Today he hoped that the ghost wouldn't show up, not at the meeting where he would have to pretend he didn't see the annoying teenager in front of his followers. Unfortunately, the ghost was not one to miss the opportunity to butt him, Harry was sitting in an apparently vacant chair in the corner. And he was smiling, that's what Tom found the most annoying. For a ghost he was actually fairly content to just smile and watch his former nemesis suffer. Thankfully he hadn't done anything yet.

He was listening to a few death eaters talk about how they had been attacked in Diagon Alley a few weeks before. Apparently there had been two of them that had attacked them, and to make themselves look not as pathetic they claimed that the two had been members of the Order. Tom could dare less, two people had outpowered three of them. They couldn't even win a duel when they outnumbered their enemies. Tom shook his head, "You three are pathetic, and I doubt that they were members of the Order. However, they must pay for their actions, who were they?"



“The boy was a redhead, probably one of the Weasleys, the girl must have been a mudblood, because I didn’t recognize her. They did leave a note for you though.” Dolohov said digging the note out of his pocket, it was instantly summoned by Tom. Harry walked over and read it over Tom’s shoulder.

Harry smiled because he had really hoped he hadn’t missed Tom’s reaction to this. It was going to be interesting, but all he said was, “Cool, I have people avenging my death.”

Meanwhile, Tom was looking at the words ‘Bring it, Tom’ remembering the only two times he had ever heard those words. The first was in the Department of Mysteries right after he saw the Wizarding World’s Golden Boy kill for the first time. The second was a month later when the same boy had walked into his midst and gloated some kind of invincibility. Both times Harry should have died, and both times he lived against all odds. Perhaps those words had been passed down to this group of followers, two of which attacked his death eaters who were pathetic enough to get beaten. But why leave a note? To taunt him, scare him, initiate a competition, or simply remind him that there are in fact people who want him to meet his doom. As much as he would like to ponder the note and its meaning for a few hours, he had a meeting to continue. He quickly turned his attention to Lucius and listened to the monotone voice talk about what was going on at the ministry. Both Malfoy’s had adopted the monotone voice since their son’s death.

Harry hadn’t moved away, but was now just in Tom’s sight as he watched Malfoy, his head cocked to the side looking at Lucius as well. Finally Harry turned to Tom with a grin on his face, “Five galleons says Lucius dyes his hair. Well, enchanting it is probably more like it, I don’t imagine that Lucius Malfoy would stoop to something quite as muggle as hair dye.”

Tom had to fight to keep a straight face as the meeting went on, when he wasn’t trying to kill the boy and vice versa, Harry could have a sense of humor. Just snide comments here or there about the death eaters that were actually quite funny. Harry made a face at the new Hogwarts headmaster, “Wow, he can keep a straight face through anything. Has he ever shown any emotion?” Though perhaps

the most amusing thing he did was constantly poke Peter Pettigrew in the back, making the rat-like man jump, every single time. He did it for over an hour. It wasn't for a while that Harry finally answered Tom's questioning looks, "I know that he's never really done anything to really harm me, not that a pathetic creature such as Peter could, but it does relieve a lot of stress."

Tom scoffed, "You're dead, how stressed out could you be?"

Harry smiled, "It's for fun then." Harry's smile wasn't exactly because of his constant bothering of Peter, but the fact that he was actually figuring out how to find the small part of Tom that knew trust.

January 29

Harry had found that it was just as easy to annoy Tom by being silent as it was to talk non-stop. And on a few occasions Tom had even started a conversation, just like he did today, "Are you just going to sit there all day?"

"Well, considering I've only been here for fifteen minutes, I think it's a little early for you to be assuming my day's activities." Harry replied staring off into space.

"I'm curious, where do you go when you're not bugging me?" Tom asked, looking up from his book on dark magic.

"Oh, so you do care." Harry said teasingly, but gave him a slightly more direct answer when Tom glared at him, "Moaning Myrtle offered to share her toilet when I died."

"A girl's bathroom?" Tom frowned, "Pervert."

"Oh, like the great heir of Slytherin was never in there." Harry rolled his eyes. "Just curious, I can vaguely understand your hatred for muggles, but half bloods? You're such a hypocrite, your father was a muggle and mother was a conniving, potion loving, manipulating... hamster." Harry finished slowly.

“Hamster? Is that the best you can come up with?” Tom asked, not offended at all by what Harry had said.

“Sorry, that was bad. Didn’t think that far ahead,” He admitted, “So why do you hate half bloods?”

“I don’t.” Tom replied curtly, and then returned to working on some note to one of his minions to order them to do something.

“Oh come off it, you can’t say something like that and not explain yourself.”

“I don’t have to explain anything I do, I rule the world.”

“You don’t rule me, and I have the ability to make your life a living hell.”

Tom sighed, as he often did when he lost these battles, “I hate mudbloods, and I like the purebloods, but I trust the half bloods willing to join my cause. I consider them to be on my level, that having to deal with both the magical and muggle world intermittently makes them stronger and makes it easier for them to keep up guises. Besides, they aren’t pompous asses.”

Harry shrugged, “If they’re so good at keeping up guises, how do you know they’re still on your side?”

“They fear me.” Tom replied simply.

Harry shrugged again with a non-committal expression, “If you say so.” Harry said before floating back to his body. He’d done today’s mission, he’d planted a seed of doubt in Tom’s mind, hopefully it was enough to make him suspicious of the seven deatheaters that were half bloods.

February 14

Just over two weeks had caused three deatheaters to die and one other to go ‘missing’. Harry knew his plan couldn’t be going better,

and the rest of the group was excited, but nervous as well. Tom was growing a bit reckless, not enough that there was wide spread panic, but enough that a few people noticed something amiss.

It was well past mid day, and to celebrate Valentine's they had a semi romantic dinner(only semi because Draco was glaring at them all for not respecting the fact that he didn't have a girlfriend, and the fact that it was constantly suggested that he and Firesong get together). Vaughn had surprised them all by letting Wolf go pester Tom today, but there was a condition, he had to go over a certain topic with Tom and tell them every detail of Tom's reaction. Wolf had eagerly agreed and was now drifting into Tom's room where he was working on some politics related item. Wolf couldn't deny how fun this was going to be.

"Happy Valentine's Day Lord Fish Head," Harry greeted, almost too cheerfully.

"Go jump off a cliff." Tom replied. He was in a sour mood, he usually was these days as he was slowly creeping over the edge of sanity.

"What, doesn't the almighty ruler of the world have someone to be with on Valentine's Day?" Tom flinched, just as Harry had hoped, "What, has our master never had a date?"

"No."

"Unless you can count when you were possessing Vaughn and Ginny as getting close enough to call it a date. Possession does take to souls and bring them close together." Tom finally looked up at Harry, "I wonder what people would do if the intertwining of souls during possession of the mind was more well known? You heard about Krum, did you not?"

"How couldn't I?" Tom replied dryly.

"If the Weasleys would do that to a man they had no other grudge against, what do you think they'd do to you? It'll be a really gory sight, can I watch?"

Tom cocked his head to the side, he seemed to not have thought of the violent tendencies of the Weasleys before, but was now quietly calculating all the possibilities. "I assure you, I will not allow those boys close enough to harm me."

Harry smiled, "I think you should be more afraid about Ginny, not only does she have a temper, but she has most of Hogwarts in the palm of her hand."

Suddenly Tom was realizing just how far away Hogwarts had gotten from his grasp, but he was not above bickering with the ghost while he was thinking, "And you know this from hanging out in a girl's bathroom. Pervert."

"Hey, I'm not the one that snooped around a girl's bathroom to find a secret passage. Who's the pervert now?" Tom raised an eyebrow, and Harry relented, "Fine, we're both perverts. Happy."

"Only if you're going away."

"Sorry, I've got one more question for you, then I'll leave you for tonight."

Tom sighed, he had enough to think about, what the hell was this ghost going to tell him now? He turned away from his work completely, "Fine, let's get this over with."

"Why do you use puppets?" Harry asked.

Tom was not expecting such an easy question, then again, he was talking to a ghost, "What do you mean puppets?"

"You rule with puppets, you control the Ministry, the laws, Hogwarts, the world, yet you don't give yourself credit for it." Harry elaborated, "Why?"

"For my own safety and to stop panic." Tom answered automatically, it was the same answer he had given his followers many times over.

“Liar, you like a little chaos and with me and Dumbledore gone and your followers surrounding you, you don’t need to hide.” Harry argued. “It’s because you’re too afraid to show your face, too afraid people will rebel. Yet, you aren’t afraid that one of your followers will turn his back on you and destroy you.”

“Are you telling me how to run my empire?” Tom growled, scared by how true the statement was.

“No,” Harry said softly, “I’m just saying that if I was the all powerful leader of an empire that had no chance of dying as you do, I wouldn’t hide in the shadows. I would make it known who was running the world, and be proud of it.”

Tom froze as Harry left. Why was he hiding in the shadows? Sure, if his body was destroyed he would have to rebuild his body, and annoying as that was, it was far from impossible. However, he wasn’t sure he wanted to risk it all yet. He needed time to consider the possibilities. Especially the Weasley Factor. The Weasley Factor was important.

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(A/N: Sorry, I’m taking so long, but the ideas I was given aren’t exactly what I expected, perhaps after reading this I will get some more fitting ideas. Thank you to Aisling13 and Phoenix4life, even though I twisted your ideas a bit to make them work. And no, no matter how tempting a DracoxFiresong pairing is, that’s just wrong and I won’t do it. As for Ginny, I have narrowed it down to either being Draco, Seamus, Theodore Nott or one of the characters that is new to the Order that you haven’t met yet. Please vote, because I’m torn!)

“Severus! Do you know what’s going on in this school?” Amycus yelled when he and his sister barged into the Headmaster’s office.

Currently, said headmaster was wondering why he even had a door to his office when the only people who came in his office didn’t bother to knock. Perhaps there was a charm he could use to fix that... That would have to wait, “What are you talking about this time?”

“Are you trying to pass off that you haven’t noticed?” Alecko asked with an incredulous look on her face. Severus, of course, was perfectly aware of the situation, more so than either of these two thugs could imagine. Only, this was one of the few ways he could find entertainment these days, annoying the Carrows. Ranked third best entertainment Hogwarts had ever had behind bugging the Toad and bothering Snape. Admittedly, he had grown to miss being bothered. Anyway, back to the discussion they were supposed to be having, Alecko was currently yelling hysterically, “The students are missing!”

“Surely a witch as capable as yourself would be able to look outside and see that there are students playing in the snow.” Severus drawled, knowing it would only infuriate his guests further.

“Not all of them, but a large number, mainly from Gryffindor, Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff. Even a few Slytherins! Not the slightest clue as to where they are.” Amycus argued.

Snape stood and walked to the two Carrows remembering how he was supposed to say this so it would give the right impression, “How can you be this blind? I’ve been able to figure out that this was going to happen from the beginning of the year. The students are unhappy with the current situation, and haven’t been taught to sit back and watch it happen. They’re going to start a rebellion, and there’s nothing we can do about it. Those students that have left were either trained by Potter himself two years ago, or have decided their loyalty since and been trained. These students are more like soldiers, and won’t give up, remember what happened to Umbridge?” Okay, it wasn’t exactly what Ginny had told him to say, but it was close enough to get the reaction that they wanted.

“Thank you Severus, for that lovely description of what’s going on.” Sarcasm and Lord Voldemort’s voice had a decidedly bad sound. And when exactly did he come in? Severus returned to his thoughts about just getting rid of the door so he would expect his privacy to be intruded upon, “You think that it is likely for something to happen with the same multitude of what happened with that Umbridge woman.”

The three followers who had bowed when they found out their master was in the room rose and Severus spoke, “I think it will be worse than before, the group is much, much bigger and has more motivation. Even without Potter and his closest friends, they have managed to get this far in the year without getting caught. They’re starting something, but we can’t even look at what they have done in the past to make a benchmark. Instead of Potter they have miss Weasley as the brains behind this.”

“These people are pathetic, they can’t even keep track of a few kids. And it’s not like they can get off school property. Where could they go?” Harry said from the corner of the room. “Remind me again why you let these fools be in charge.”

Because I’m still not ready to lead yet, but with everything going on... The Dark Lord thought and then realized that the Carrows and Severus were still waited for him to talk, having not been able to hear Potter’s view. Surprisingly, Tom had grown used to the second opinion on things, it was really useful. And after two weeks of being bothered constantly on the subject, Tom no longer trusted most of the Ministry. In just over a weeks time he would declare himself the new Minister. For now though, he had to give instructions, “I want to know if there is any change in the students, make them know that rebellion. Severus, I want you to send me weekly reviews of the state of mind of the students, seeing as you’ve been around them longest. Amicus, I want you to send me daily reports of anyone who seems hesitant to your teaching. Understood?”

Severus nodded, but Amicus seemed displeased, “But master, everyday? There will be barely anything to report on a daily basis. Perhaps once a week like Severus-“



The rest of what Amycus said was drowned out by Harry acting as his subconscious, "Are you going to take that? He's your follower, meant to take and fulfill your orders, not question them. If I was you I wouldn't let him live."

Harry was right, he didn't have to take this from some overly cruel little whelp, "Avada Kadavra," Tom killed him before anyone but Harry could realize what was happening. Aleto was visibly shaken by watching her brother's death. Severus held his surprise in, other than a small flinch there was nothing to see, "Severus, I hope you won't object to having your old position back, giving me a report via owl every day won't be a problem, will it?"

"Of course not, master." Came Severus' even voice, same as it would have been had Amycus not been killed three seconds before. Severus was his wonderfully faithful half blood follower. Severus had never failed him once in twenty years of service.

"Good, I expect the first report tomorrow," The Dark Lord turned to leave, but turned back to the room focusing somewhere beyond his followers with a unique expression on his face, "Aren't you coming?"

Severus looked around the room, not sure if someone else had come in without knocking. There was no one there. Perhaps he was talking to him, but no, he would have ordered him to answer long before now.

The Dark Lord sighed, "If you're sure, then I will see you later. Tomorrow?" He asked something no one else saw, "Yes, that will do just fine." And with that he finally left the room, leaving two very freaked out death eaters. Perhaps the rumors were true, the almighty Dark Lord had lost his mind.

Tempus Praeter (February 28th to be exact)

"What the hell?" Sirius said, pretty much summarizing the thoughts of the entire Order as they received the Daily Prophet. 'New Minister is Voted into Office' the front page screamed, and just below it was the sardonic eyes of none other than the Dark Lord. Oh, and the rest

of his face too, but he was smiling and people preferred to ignore that as much as possible. It wasn't a pretty sight.

"Why would he choose to declare himself ruler now? If he was going to do this, why not just do it ten months ago when Harry and Dumbledore died?" Tonks asked, "All this is going to do is seriously freak people out, cause chaos and confusion."

"It's not like him, he's always had protection in public, and now he's being careless." Moody growled, "No vigilance these days. Just as bad as carrying your wand in your back pocket."

"I have an idea, let's just wait for him to put his wand in his back pocket and blow up his buttocks." Said the newcomer to the group, an over eager young man that had just recently finished his schooling at Durmstang. Apparently his goal in life was proving that not all of Durmstang's students were stoic and army-like. And most people found that annoying. Extremely so. Naum Chilicov was a mudblood in the sense that both of his parents were half bloods, his father a proud Bulgarian that had been killed in the first war, and his mother a British witch that had raised him on her own. Naum was one of the few people from Durmstrang that chose not to be neutral on the issue, and the Order was admittedly glad of that when they found out that he was one of the best duelists that ever came from Durmstang.

Which didn't make him any less annoying.

After a long stretching silence, Kingsley cleared his throat, "I find it strange that while so many people are 'mysteriously disappearing' from the Ministry," Kingsley began, using finger quotes to further express his point, "None of them are on our side. Every last one has been a known death eater, imperiused, or neutral. Shouldn't he be killing his enemies?"

"Should be, but 'should be' doesn't happen as often as it used to." Sirius said softly, "Come to think of it, nothing's been quite right for the last few months, ever since..." Sirius trailed off slowly, he didn't need to bring up Ron and Hermione's disappearance.

Molly had grown quiet ever since, an unusual and nerve-wracking change, “Do you think they’re... still alive?” She asked quietly.

“Hard to tell,” Moody admitted, “You’d think that if he killed two people on our side as important as them he’d brag about it, bring down his enemies morale. Once again, he’s been acting strange lately, so for all we know, they could be in Brazil.”

In Brazil

“Ron, what do you mean you can’t speak Portugese?” Hermione yelled at him, extremely annoyed that 1. Her hair and humidity didn’t mix well, she currently looked like a puffball and 2. Her boyfrind had claimed that he would be able to talk to people in Brazil. Claimed. Which in this case meant that they might as well be trying to talk to animals.

“I thought they spoke French here, honestly.” Ron shot back.

“If Brazil spoke French, I could translate. If it was Spanish, Vaughn and Harry would be able to piece it together. If it was one of twelve languages other than Portugese, Draco could help. Just curious, other than French and English, what languages can you speak?”

“...Canadian?”

“That’s not a language, that’s... oh never mind, it doesn’t even matter.” Hermione said and stalked away.

Draco snickered from the a few feet away and muttered something that was definitely an insult, Ron rolled his eyes, “At least I have a girlfriend.”

“At least I know Canadian isn’t a language.”

“At least I’m not a pompous ass.”

“At least I look good when I’m being a pompous ass.”

“Hey, next person who talks will be shown just how good I am with knives.” Vaughn yelled over to them, glaring profusely.

The two backed down, knowing that she kept to her threats, but Ron ventured to argue quietly, “He started it.”

“Yeah, and I ended it.” She said and picked up her knives, she had three knives, each with six inch blades that she kept with her constantly now days. She aimed for a small knot on the tree between the boys, twenty feet away from her and threw her knives on by one, “You know guys, it’s kind of sad that the youngest person here has to keep breaking up fights.”

“...Nice aim,” Draco said, all three knives had landed on the knot of the tree with less than an inch between them. Deciding to get on her good side, he went to pull one of the knives out for her. Unfortunately, it didn’t move. He pulled harder with no avail before he braced himself by putting one foot on the trunk of the tree and pulling with both hands. Finally the knife came free, and Draco toppled backwards landing on his back. Vaughn didn’t even bother laughing as she stepped over him and pulled the other two knives from the tree at the same time with almost no effort.

She rolled her eyes, “Give that to me before you hurt yourself, Pretty Boy.” Draco handed it to her gingerly, still surprised he hadn’t stabbed himself while he fell. She gathered the three knives in her left hand and offered her right hand to Draco, “Need a hand Pretty Boy?”

“No.” Draco said pulling himself to his feet on his own in attempt to keep some of his dignity. He over consciously brushed the dirt from his clothes while asking, “Since when do you call me ‘Pretty Boy’?”

Vaughn smiled, “Always, I’ve just been able to keep it in my head most of the time. Now I know what you’re going to ask next, ‘Why do you call me Pretty Boy?’ Well frankly, it’s because your narcissistic blonde who’s obsessed with his own looks. As proof, altogether, we have two brushes, one of them is yours, every one shares the other. And even though we aren’t anywhere near civilization we can talk to-” Vaughn took a moment to send a rather nasty glare at Ron before

returning her attention to blondie, “You still insist on gelling your hair every day. By the way, I don’t know if any one has ever told you this, but your gel smells like a mix between a sewage pipe, a dung bomb and a seven year old sandwich that has been reduced to liquid form. Oh, and a hint of lemon, which doesn’t make it any better.”

“Okay, I get it.” Draco said rolling his eyes before he saw something, “Hey, look who’s back from bothering Tom.”

Surely enough, life had crept back to Wolf’s body and he was pulling himself to his feet wearing an unreadable expression. That was out of character to say the least, usually the first thing he did when his soul returned to his body was tell them just what he had did because he was excited. Now he seemed worried, something had changed, gone differently than the Plan. He seemed slightly distracted by Vaughn holding her knives, but seemed to decide that either he didn’t want to know, or Draco and Ron had been fighting again. Hermione had crept back to the clearing they were camping in when she heard that Wolf was back. Wolf finally found the words to ask his question, “What do you guys know about the Deathly Hallows?”

“There’s a fairy tale about them being given to three brothers by death,” Ron offered, “A wand that can’t lose in a duel, a ring that can bring back the dead, and a cloak that will make you invisible and never lose it’s magic. You don’t seriously think they exist do you?”

“How long do enchantments on invisibility cloaks usually last?” Wolf asked.

Ron shrugged, “Five to ten years, the record is about sixteen years.”

“I’ve had my invisibility cloak for seven years, from what I heard, my father had it first and got it from his dad when he was a first year. The nine years he had it, plus the seven years I had it, and the eleven years in between, is twenty-seven years, and the quality hasn’t changed. I think I have all three Hallows.”

“Harry, I agree that you have the cloak, if it is actually Hallow, but it’s still only one.” Hermione pointed out, wondering when Wolf had lost his mind.

Wolf went over to his bag and pulled out a smaller bag that he claimed was full of items important to him and enchanted to never be full, and started pulling items out: Tom Riddle’s Diary, the first knife Sable had given him, a list of every known prophecy that Vaughn had made, the first snitch he had ever caught, a piece of seaweed from the second task of the triwizard tournament, a small photo album that had pictures from fourth and fifth year, half a pack of gum, Slytherin’s locket, a crowbar, a strange ring(which he set aside from the now huge pile of things he was pulling out before continuing), a roll of duct tape, the diadem of Ravenclaw, a copy of ‘Lord of the Flies’ in paperback, a flashlight, the cup of Hufflepuff, a bag of flour, and finally a wand that no one could ever remember seeing. Wolf turned to the rest of the group, who were openly staring with their mouths wide open. Wolf frowned at this, “What?”

“I thought you told us that everything in that bag was important.” Vaughn said accusingly.

“It is.” Wolf said in defense of his pile of junk.

“The seaweed?”

“Souvineer from my first time swimming.”

“Half a pack of gum?”

“Hey, it was a full pack of gum until that plane ride. You guys should be thankful.”

“Ok, I’ll give you that one. Duct tape?”

“I brought that especially for Ron and Draco.”

“... How come I never thought of that? The bag of flour?”

“In case we need to make cookies.”

“Why would we be making cookies?”

“Boredom.”

“What about the other ingredients necessary for making cookies?”

“...”

“Let’s move on, what about the copy of ‘Lord of the Flies’?”

“I seriously have no idea how that got in there. I haven’t even read the book.”

“Ok, now, can you explain the ring and the wand?”

“Oh, right, the ring is the second Hallow, the stone is cracked because it was at one point a horcrux, Dumbledore tried to use the ring to bring back his sister, but it was cursed, which is why his hand was all shriveled up and charred. As for the wand, it’s the Elder wand.”

“How do you know?” Ron asked looking at it closely, just like the others.

“Because I do.” Wolf answered.

“Is there any way we could get you to be more specific?” Hermione questioned him with a raised eyebrow.

“Grindelwald was the last known person to have it, since Dumbledore defeated Grindelwald, this wand should be the Elder Wand.” Wolf said after a moment’s hesitation.

Draco gave him a strange look, “How exactly did you get it, you had to have had it before Dumbledore’s death.”

“Umm...” Wolf said, as he remembered exactly how it had happened.

Flashback

“You need to hide in Hogsmeade, now.” Wolf had told Dumbledore as soon as they had arrived in Hogsmeade with the fake horcrux.

Dumbledore’s eyes had narrowed in confusion, “Why?”

Wolf had inwardly sighed remembering just what was at stake tonight, hundreds of lives. He’d known the risk, but it wasn’t until now that it hit him, now that it was too late to go back on his plan, “There’s going to be death eaters here soon and you’re in no condition to fight. Will someone here give you shelter?”

Dumbledore chose not to ask about what was going on, he didn’t really want to know, “Rosmerta may, how long have you known about this?”

“Longer than you’d care to know. I need to get back and help though.” Wolf said as he began leading the old headmaster to The Three Broomsticks. It took almost no time to get to her door.

Before knocking the old man stopped Wolf by standing in front of him, “You should take this, you’ll need it more than me.” Dumbledore was offering him his wand.

Wolf stared at it, “What the hell are you talking about? I’m not going to take away your only means of protection.”

Dumbledore took out another wand, “It’s not my main wand. This one is special when it comes to dueling, I want you to take it. I won’t make it until morning anyway, and the world can’t stand to lose you.” Wolf didn’t take it, Dumbledore added in a soft voice, “Please, settle an old man’s mind.”



I don't have time for this Wolf thought wildly as he gently accepted the wand from the old man, not believing what he was doing. He felt numb as Dumbledore knocked on Rosmerta's door and asked for her to provide Wolf with a broom. Harry slipped the newly acquired wand into a hidden pocket inside his cloak and bid the two good bye as he went to the Astronomy tower.

End Flashback

"I'd rather not talk about the specifics, just live with the fact that I didn't steal it and I didn't kill to gain possession of it." Wolf answered after a very long pause.

"Well, is Tom interested in the Elder Wand?" Vaughn asked.

"Very." Wolf said in the same awkward tone he had answered the last question, "I just watched him desecrate Dumbledore's tomb to try and find it. By the way, Ginny's got a great bat bogey hex and is very good at getting away with things like that."

"Ginny hexed Tom!" Ron exclaimed, very proud of his little sister.

"Yes, and generally caused a large riot of students that aren't even part of the SET." Wolf replied.

"Wow," Draco said in a far away voice, "She has done some really amazing things, she's smart, strong willed, and cute..."

"Are you hitting on my sister?" Ron asked, looking furious.

"...Yes, I suppose I am." Draco admitted.

Ron took a few minutes to try to think logically, unfortunately, the nicest thing he could think to say was, "If I were you, I'd keep what happened to Krum in mind."

Draco paled, but Hermione actually laughed, "Being around you guys is like watching a soap-opera. Ginny loved Harry, and Draco loved

Vaughn, and then Harry and Vaughn got together, and now Draco's in love with Ginny. It's so cute."

"You wouldn't be saying that if it was your sister." Ron muttered.

Alius Positus

Three knocks.

Sable sighed, "I'll get it." Ferret nodded. He hadn't taken Wolf and Vaughn's death well, he considered the two of them to be his siblings. He'd been fatherly when he found out they were going out, had cared for them when they had lived on the streets, threatened a werewolf to ensure their protection. He was the ultimate guardian, and he was crushed when he found out that Wolf had died, and had known that Vaughn wouldn't live long afterward.

Sable pulled himself to his feet, carrying a larger burden than any twenty-six year-old should carry. Ferret heard the door open then could hear someone crying, which immediately caught her attention. Her curiosity was partially satisfied when her husband asked loudly, "Lynn, Lynn, what's wrong?"

The girl didn't reply, but allowed herself to be led into the cluttered yet cozy living room that was complete with a fire. Lynn soon found herself curled up on the couch sandwiched between Ferret and Sable that were doing their best to comfort her. After a few minutes she was able to wipe the tears from her eyes, confident that she could talk now.

Ferret softly asked, "Can you tell us what's wrong?"

"Stalker..." She said quietly, feeling herself tear up.

Sable stiffened, "Are you saying that he's... dead?"

Lynn was shaking at this point, "No, not exactly, I think I would actually prefer that." She said allowing her anger to take over, "Some Hispanic chick that he was close to came back, for about three

months he acted weird and decided he was going back to Chile. Bastard.”

“That doesn’t sound like Stalker at all.” Ferret deadpanned. What had this world come to?

“That’s why this was so hard. At least I have enough connections that I was able to get a job at the University of Surrey.” She hid her anger poorly as she tried to move on to a new subject. “So, how are Vaughn and Wolf doing? They’re a couple now right?”

“Yeah, they got together three Summers back,” Ferret answered softly, “You should have seen the look on Sable’s face when he found out.”

Lynn laughed, not truly happy, but it was enough to show that she happy for the bit of normalcy. “So where are those two now?”

“Wolf’s six feet under and Vaughn’s body was never found.” Sable said after a moment.

Lynn froze, she even stopped breathing for a couple seconds, she stared at Sable like he was insane. She looked at Ferret as if to ask if her husband was telling the truth or he just had a sicker sense of humor than she thought. She dearly hoped for the latter, but Ferret confirmed that it was the former. Her stomach twisted horribly and she curled in on herself as she began to cry again. She felt Sable put his arms around her, he had always had a soft spot for tears. It took what felt like a lifetime to calm down to the point of talking again, “How did they die, to your knowledge?”

“Are you sure you want to know?” Ferret asked quietly, when she saw that Sable was finally crying about it to, though he wasn’t being nearly as dramatic as Lynn was.

“I don’t want to Ferret, I need to. I need to know why my baby sister and little brother are dead.” The desperation in her voice was so thick that there was no denying her the information.

“Wolf was dueling with an evil wizard on the Astronomy Tower at his school, he was disarmed and thrown god knows how many stories to the ground.” Ferret said softly, barely keeping her own tears at bay, “After that Vaughn was just wrapping things up, not really alive herself. She left a note and then disappeared. That was eight months ago, her body was never found.”

“At least she died for love,” Lynn said quietly enough that you couldn’t tell she was crying, “You said she left a note, do you have it?”

Why is she doing this to herself? Ferret asked herself even though she was retrieving the note that had been found in Vaughn’s room. She brought it back to the sister she had never had and handed it to her. Sable released Lynn, mainly to distance himself from the letter that he had read thousands of times. Meanwhile, Lynn read her biological sister’s neat handwriting:

I always thought that leaving a suicide note was stupid. Now, I disagree.

It gives you the chance to say things that you don’t have the guts or the mental capacity to deal with, and you don’t have to deal with the repercussions thereof. Not that I plan on writing anything I would regret.

First of all, I would like to apologize to all those I am leaving. To Sable, the best big brother that could ever exist. To Ferret, the equivalent to a mother in my life. To Lynn, the one person who knew what made me tick, and annoyed me with it constantly, I love you more than I ever showed. To Sirius, whose true personality was far from what his name would suggest, you were like a father to me. And to my friends, I apologize for the burden I pass onto you. Forgive me.

Wolf is dead, and since he was the only person in my life I would sacrifice myself for, he was the most important thing in my life. People think that killing myself is a waste of life, that I should continue to live. To put this in perspective, would you rather die, or barely live

with your chest having a massive hole in it. Believe me, you'd choose death.

I'm falling apart, I'm barely breathing, with a broken heart that's still beating.

This is goodbye my friends.

Vaughn

It was read several times before Lynn said anything, "Is it strange that I'm glad she decided to take her own life."

"Yes," Sable said, "But everyone who has read that has found it impossible to call it an all out bad decision."

"My sister was a strong person, she could do anything she wanted, she was cursed with stupid prophecies that plagued her final years, she loved her childhood sweetheart, he loved her back, they dated until death and did what they could to change the world. I'm proud of them. Fiercely proud." Lynn said cautiously.

"We all are Lynn." Ferret said quietly, "The whole Pack is, Lulu."

They all heard a strange sound, one that Lynn was far from expecting in their house of all places. Sable and Ferret watched her expression to see if she approved or not. Lynn made a curious face, "Was that sound what I think it was?"

Ferret smiled, "Yes, it was."

-

(A/N: Sorry it's taken me so long to update, but I've been having some serious time issues with sports three days a week, community service that's required for school, and enough homework to make small children cry. Well, it's enough to make me cry anyway. FYI, I'm going to make some very strange pairings later on, so for now, just smile and nod. Also, Stalker has been expelled from the Pack, they

are secretly hoping that something unfortunate happens to him in Chile. The remaining members of the Pack will have happy endings. Comments, praise, complaints and flames are always welcome. The latter two will be burned to keep me warm until we get new heating!)

March 28

He had underestimated it.

Again.

He had given himself one hundred and thirteen days to take a man who was half crazed and make him completely insane.

He had underestimated how far Tom Riddle already was down that road.

“The third, then the fifth, the fourth would be too soon.” Wolf calculated out loud, confusing the others completely, then realized they wanted an explanation, “I... Tom has lost his mind to the extent that what control I had to keep him from killing the innocent is slipping. I can’t keep this up another month. I’m going to need to contact Ginny and tell her to move the date of writing the message from the twenty-third to the third of April. Tom should see it on the fourth, and we will reveal ourselves on the fifth and I will kill Tom.”

“Harry, it’s the twenty-eighth of March, do you really think we can be ready in time?” Draco asked.

“Are you kidding me Draco?” Wolf said in the happiest tone they’d heard from him in weeks, “From what I’ve gathered, we have over seventy-five students from Hogwarts ready to fight, the entire Order of about thirty, and the five of us who are all assumed to be dead. Oh, and a dragon.”

“A dragon that’s very helpful when it comes to making smores.” Vaughn added as she held out a stick with a marshmallow at the end of it. Firesong breathed fire onto it, and Vaughn spent the next thirty seconds trying to put the marshmallow out by blowing on it before sandwiching it between two graham crackers and chocolate. Everyone just stared at her, and when she noticed she asked, “What?”

“That’s absolutely disgusting.” Draco said, which he was the only one that thought so, everyone else was wondering why she didn’t just roast the marshmallows over the fire.

“Well sorry. Not all of us think that chocolate is the ‘most vile substance known to humans’. How the hell can you not like chocolate?” She asked moodily. Draco merely pulled a face in reply.

“Draco, she’s done worse. Like that time that she made smores, but she replaced the graham crackers with tortilla chips and the chocolate with nacho cheese dip.” Wolf said, “It was actually pretty good.”

“Okay... can we get back to how we’re going to kill Tom in what, eight days. How are we going to tell Ginny that we’re changing the date?” Ron asked, really not wanting to think about mixing nachos and marshmallows.

“Actually, I was thinking of sending a simple note that has our message hidden in it so if anyone else reads it, no one will think much of it. However, I doubt that Ginny will be allowed mail. We need to be careful about this.” Wolf explained. The next two hours were spent writing the letter so it would be just right.

## Tempus Praeter

Collin Creevey ran up to the library carrying a thick letter in his hand, once there, he handed it to Lavender Brown who was in the middle of her transfiguration homework. She opened the large letter to find another one in it and rushed off the quidditch pitch where she found Hannah Abbott watching her boyfriend practice. Hannah opened the letter that had her name on it to find another letter inside, she rushed off to the first floor to give it to the next recipient, Professor McGonagall. After looking at it for a minute she passed it to Gregory Goyle who kept in his pocket until lunch. There he handed it off to Michael Corner, who slipped it to Ellie Woods of Hufflepuff, who gave it to Parvarti Patil. During Parvarti’s last class, she handed the next smallest envelope to Luna Lovegood who Snape excused from Dark Arts early to deliver the final and now rather famous envelope.



Luna ran up the stairs two at a time to the seventh floor and ran into the room of requirement finding Ginny and a few other people lounging around waiting for something to happen. Luna handed Ginny the letter, and Ginny just stared, it was Vaughn's handwriting, "How did you get this?"

"Well, it's quite complicated actually," Luna began, "Dennis and Collin Creevey got a package from their parents this morning, it had a bunch of honeydukes sweets and a thick envelope that said 'to Lavender Brown' in Hermione's handwriting. Collin took it to Lavender who opened the letter and gave it to Hannah, this went on as the envelope was passed to McGonagall, Goyle, Michael, Ellie, Parvarti, and finally me, who gave it to you. I wonder what something that had to be hidden this well could be?"

"Yeah, it has to be important." Ginny agreed and opened the letter, it was in Ron's closest impression of Charlie's hand. Which was close enough that Ginny could hardly tell the difference.

Hey Gin,

Sorry I had to take such a roundabout way of contacting you, but with the current situation, I wasn't sure if there was another way to get this to you.

Either way, you know the project for mum and dad's anniversary? Well, I said I could wait until the twenty-third of April, but I actually need them much sooner. So can you mail the notes on the third instead.

And if everything goes well, I'll be seeing everyone on the fifth, make sure everyone knows, 'kay Gin?

-Charlie

"Uh, Ginny, wasn't your parents' anniversary last month?" Luna asked as she read over her shoulder.

“Luna, first of all, yeah, it was last month,” Ginny said as realization swept over her, “Second of all, this was written by Ron, the outside of my envelope was written by Vaughn, the Lavender’s was by Hermione and yours was written by Draco.”

Luna checked the writing again, “Well, this would imply that Draco, Vaughn and Harry are most likely not dead. Also, that this letter does not mean what it says, but is a hidden message.”

“ My thoughts exactly.” Ginny agreed, “I’m supposed to do something on the third instead of twenty-third... The Message to Tom.”

Luna watched as Ginny froze up, “What message?”

“I’m supposed to write ‘when was the last time you saw the snake’s locket’ in the Great Hall. It’s supposed to start the final battle in the war, I think. Oh, and we have to warn the Order, from the sound of it, Tom’s expected here on the fifth.” Ginny explained, “Are you thinking what I’m thinking?”

“Send either my dad or Neville’s grandma a package with the real envelope that will be addressed to one of the members of the Order and will be passed from member to member until it reaches the last one to make it hard to keep track of.” Luna answered.

“And spread it quietly among the staff and students.” Ginny added, “This isn’t something we should launch on the school without preparation. Harry may have taken some risks that were stupid, but he never made anyone helpless and usually threw off the balance so our side would win. And we will win.”

March 29

“Why couldn’t who ever sent this have just sent it to Sirius in the first place?” Naum asked looking annoyed at the last five minutes that were spent passing envelopes around the kitchen of the Burrow.

“For safety, because unlike you, they use constant vigilance.” Moody snapped, making the young Bulgarian jump.

“Uh, guys, I think that this is a bit more important,” Sirius said and then began reading the letter:

To the members of the Order of the Phoenix,

We of the SET have recently received intelligence that there will be a battle at Hogwarts against Tom Riddle on the fifth day of April, that should be exactly one week after you receive this letter.

The SET will have many joining in the battle, we have forty fifth, sixth and seventh year students that will keep the fight outside of Hogwarts, the other twenty-nine will be helping from places where the chance of getting injuries is nearly zero percent.

We are asking for your help in this battle so that we can rid the world of Tom Riddle forever.

There is a large possibility that a few of our other friends will be joining us, you may be surprised at their appearance, but everything will be explained after the battle.

Also, Tom Riddle keeps a pet snake referred to as Nagini. Before Tom is killed, the snake must die. Otherwise, Tom's demise will be delayed. Once again, explanations will follow the battle.

Meet us by the lake at dawn on the fifth.

-The SET, and their Queen.

The room was quiet for a few seconds before Naum felt it necessary to open that troublesome mouth of his, “Cool! We get to fight!”

“Naum,” Tonks said rolling her eyes, “Do us a favor and shut the hell up.”

Naum cocked his head, "But I thought you said you liked my enthusiasm."

"Naum..."

"Right, being quiet." Naum said smiling like an idiot.

"I'm all for helping but..." Bill began making a face, "The others that they talk about, we have no idea who these people are. And we don't even know where they got their information in the first place."

"I thought Ginny would know better than to expect us to follow blindly." Moody said.

"But this is Ginny we're talking about. Can we really blow this off and risk students' lives?" Sirius asked.

"No, but how do we know her information is trustworthy?" Kingsley asked, truly hating second-guessing the Weasley girl.

"Can I see that?" Percy asked, taking the letter from Sirius and flipping it over, the first to see there was a note on the other side. He looked shaken for a moment, "Ron wrote the note on the back, even though it's his impression of Charlie's handwriting, it's dated two days ago. It says something about seeing everyone on the fifth, I bet it's some code between Ron and Ginny. The information is from Ron and Hermione."

There was a giant sigh of relief from the entire Order, Ron and Hermione were alive and arranging an end to the war. Molly was actually crying out of joy. After a few minutes people started making sure they knew who all was going to participate in the battle, while Arthur, Bill and Percy tried to convince Molly that Ginny would be fine in the battle.

"Hey, Nymmie?" Naum called, getting Tonks to roll her eyes in response, but listen just the same, "What's so important about the snake?"

Tonks shrugged, "No idea, I guess we'll have to wait until the battle is over to find out, we were promised an explanation afterwards."

"One more question," Naum insisted, "Will you go out with me?"

Tonks blanched for a minute before answering, "Ask me again after the battle, 'kay Naum?"

March 30

"Uh, Lord Fish Head, it's really not healthy to go three days without sleeping." Harry said quietly as the Dark Lord sat staring at a list of laws that seemed to go on forever with dark bags under his eyes.

"Who asked you?" Lord Fish Head growled.

"No one, but you're preparing for a rebellion. You can't rule with an iron fist if you're too tired to keep your eyes open. That's all I was saying." Harry said shrugging.

"Ha! I'll show you," Lord Fish Head yelled standing up quickly enough to make his chair fall to the floor, catching the attention of the few people in the spacious minister's office, "I'll go to sleep right now, and I will rule with the heaviest iron fist known to man. Wait, better than iron, diamond fist! Then, not only will it be painful, but it will be sparkly! Sparkly dammit!"

"..." Harry couldn't even find a rebuttle for that outburst. Why the hell would the most evil person on earth want to be thought of as sparkly? And Draco thought he was exaggerating when Harry said the Dark Lord was crazy.

Suddenly, the Dark Lord found something offensive about a cup of coffee and dictionary sitting on a desk and pulled out his wand setting the entire desk on fire, "Fools, you're both wrong, it's peaches!"

"Tom? What exactly were... they... talking about that was so offensive?" Evan Rosier asked, quite freaked out by this being added to his master's strange string of random acts.

“Crazy people were arguing about whether apples or cranberries were the best fruit, when it’s really peaches. Idiots.” The Dark Lord grumbled before walking... loping... prancing... Oh dear lord, he was skipping down the halls! Laughing maniacally. Oh, and did Harry forget to mention he was now wearing an effing top hat? He was just like those creepy magicians with that thing. He even showed people he could pull a bunny rabbit out of it! It was actually a squirrel, but it’s still creepy!

Rosier put out the burning desk once he was sure the Dark Lord was too far away to know that he had. It was then that Rosier started chanting something very quietly, over and over, and Harry snuck closer to hear(which wasn’t necessary because he was invisible), “Someone kill him, someone kill him, someone kill him, someone kill him, please.”

“Will do,” Harry said sympathizing with one of the ignored personal assistants of the Dark Lord. Evan Rosier had been a Slytherin about the same time that Lucius Malfoy and the Black sisters were at Hogwarts. The other six were all Slytherins that were older than Rosier and knew well enough to give the crazy dictator his space.

March 31

“No one younger than fifteen will be on the battlefield, and that’s final. If you disagree with that, I’m not afraid to tie you up, take your wand and lock you in a supply closet, understood?” Ginny said, both hands on her hips, eyes focused on a group of Gryffindor third years that really wanted to be in the action. However everyone nodded eventually that they would concede to her rules, “Fourth years and above on the Quidditch teams may create an air force of a sort, and don’t try to fake me out Rivers, I know you and your friends are third years.”

“Awwww.” The group of third years whined. Ginny didn’t care, she didn’t want to get stoned to death by their parents if they died, if her mother’s rage was anything to go by.

“First and second years will be on the fourth floor and above. Third and fourth years will be on the second and third floors and the grand staircase. Fifth years and Non-SET students that decide to fight will be in the Entrance Hall. Sixth and Seventh years will be on the lawn as the first line of defense. Aerial fighters will be... in the air. Remember, kill the snake if you get the chance.” Ginny rattled off while picturing it in her head.

“What about Carrow?” Pansy asked.

“What about her?” Ginny asked curious as to what Pansy would like done with Alecko Carrow.

“Can we take her wand, tie her up and lock her in a supply closet?” Pansy asked, the entire room cheered.

“Yes,” Ginny said smiling at the sole Slytherin girl in the SET. “As for those that are not on our side as students, post this on the common room door on the fourth. All it says is: You leave this room and you are in the battle. You are either on the Dark Lord’s side or ours. If you choose the Dark Lord’s we will not hesitate to think of you as the enemy. We are trained to fight, you aren’t. Choose whether to stay or go carefully. It will be signed by the head boy and girl and the prefects of each house since we are all part of the SET. Got it?”

All of the prefects and the head boy(Neville) and girl(Luna) signed the letter in preparation, it would be posted on the fourth and ten at night. The rest of the day was spent casually by the SET, dueling at their leisure, reading or playing on the quidditch pitch outside. Everything was going to be fine.

Tempus praeter

“Wolf, you slept forever, it’s the fifth!” Vaughn yelled in her boyfriend’s ear.

“What the hell!” Wolf swore and jumped to his feet only to see all his friends laughing.

“April Fool’s, Wolfie.” Vaughn said kissing his cheek.

Still April First

“Hey Ferret!” Lynn called as she read the muggle news, “Apparently a town in England named Spiggot is boycotting the metric system.”

“Lynn, first of all, there isn’t a town named Spiggot in England, and do you even know what day today is?” Ferret yelled back from the kitchen.

Lynn flipped back to the first page, and then frowned, “Dammit.”

Still April First

Three in the morning, Tonks heard her alarm go off. She angrily turned it off with practiced ease and rolled over to get back to sleep. Not five minutes later, another alarm went off, but it wasn’t her alarm clock. On the windowsill she could see the silhouette of an alarm clock that she had never noticed before, she sleepily got to her feet and turned that alarm off too, but there was a note on it. In the dark she could barely make out the words ‘April Fools!’. That’s when about twenty hidden alarm clocks went off. She cursed as she turned her light on to find the clocks and growled, “You are so going to get it Naum.”

Once Again, April First

As always, Naum got dressed and then went to the bathroom to brush his hair and teeth, in that order, and then go down to breakfast. He put his toothbrush in his mouth and something was definitely wrong. He looked at his tooth paste, it was fine, but the taste was...

Salty.

“April Fools, jerkface.” Said a very tired and not at all amused Tonks.

“Hey, you’re the one that salted my tooth brush.” Naum accused.



“And you set off twenty-seven alarm clocks in my room for three this morning. Twenty-seven. Hidden.” Tonks said coldly.

“...” Naum was speechless, “I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

Tonks could see that he was being truthful, “But if it wasn’t you, then... SIRIUS!!”

“You’re going to make him pay aren’t you?” Naum asked,

“Yeah, and you’re going to help.”

“Am I?”

“You did want to go out with me right?”

“Okay, I’m helping you.”

April First, again

“Morning Sirius,” Tonk said politely when he sat down at the breakfast table.

“Morning.” He answered, wondering why she wasn’t yelling at him for the alarm clocks. “Sleep well?”

“Gloriously,” Tonks replied cheerfully, “I got twinkies, want one?”

Sirius blinked a few times, “...Sure.”

Tonks had both twinkies on a plate, she took one off and handed the plate to Sirius as she took a bite from hers. Seeing that she was willing to eat hers, Sirius expected that his twinkie would be just fine. He took a bite. He was wrong. He choked it down as Tonks and Naum were laughing. Still coughing, he demanded, “What the hell was that?”

“A twinkie filled with mayonnaise.” Tonks smirked.

“You evil little...”

“You deserve it after the twenty-seven alarm clocks.”

“Point taken.”

April First... for the fifth or sixth time. I don't know which anymore.

“Hey Collin!” Ginny said racing up to the boy with Luna at her side, “You ready for Snape's test?”

“Test?” Collin whined, not remembering any such test.

“Yes, I spent all night studying. That and looking for my radish earrings that someone seems to have taken.” Luna agreed.

“I don't remember there being a test.” Collin said, all out panicking.

“Snape told us about it last week, it was supposed to be a practice for the final exam, making up sixty percent of our final grade.” Ginny said, “You're screwed if you forgot.”

Collin made a small whimpering noise.

The girls walked away from him, but Luna called lightly, “April Fools, Collin!”

Collins jaw dropped, “So there isn't a test?”

“Nope!” Ginny yelled back.

Collin scowled, “Evil girls.”

April 2

“You guys remember the plan right?” Wolf said.

“For the three hundred ninety-seventh time this week, yes, we’re ready.” Vaughn whined.

“I’m nervous, that’s all.” Wolf said looking up at his girlfriend, who was currently looking like she was having a stroke. A vision.

Wolf caught her before she fell to the ground, and when she registered the vision in her mind she started laughing. A large grin covered her face, “When he sees you message on the fourth, he’s going to start crying, and then run out of Hogwarts like a maniac on drugs.”

The others started laughing too, finally, Vaughn had a vision that they wanted to come true.

April 3

She felt the substance by rubbing it between her fingers, it was a slippery liquid, made a dark red to mimic blood. It was perfect for her final message. At three in the morning on the third she began writing the question on the wall behind the staff table. She had to use a stool to make the letters big enough, but when it was finally done it was well worth it. She then added some smears of the blood-like substance for the fun of it. No one would miss this when morning came. The war was so close to being over.

She hoped Wolf knew what he was doing.

What was she kidding, he always had a plan.

Okay, usually.

More often than not.

… Let’s just not think about all the times he didn’t.

Tempus Praeter

“What the hell do we do Severus? Tell him now? We don’t even know what it means? What if he kills us? Just like- Ow!” Alecko ranted, interrupted by Snape smacking her hard across the face hard enough to make her cheek turn red.

“Get a hold of yourself. I’ll send my report tonight, he’ll look at it tomorrow and we’ll find out what he’ll do then. Don’t worry yourself to death.” Severus said. He however knew this was part of Weasley’s elaborate plan to kill the Dark Lord.

“But-“

“No buts, if he kills us, he kills us. It’s out of our power now.” Severus said harshly, “Now go through your classes as usual.”

Tempus Praeter

“There’s a new message at Howarts.” Tom Riddle said in a quiet, childish way. It was really creepy. He creased his brow in thought, “Should I go see it tonight or tomorrow?”

“Tomorrow, it’s late tonight.” Harry suggested.

“Why the hell should I listen to you?” Tom snapped, “All you ever do is tell me to do this or that, you (censored). Just leave me the hell alone.”

“Have I ever told you to do something that you regretted?” Harry asked, and after a few minutes of thought, Tom shook his head. Harry snorted, “Then maybe you should be thanking me for looking out for you. Tomorrow will be better, your mind will be clearer and you will be awake enough to deal with it immediately.”

Tom thought about it, which Harry was surprised he could still do ten minutes after having a political argument with a gold fish, “Ruling with diamond fist?” Tom asked childishly.

Mentally regretting ever having started this, “Yes, sparkly.”

“Sparkly,” Tom agreed, “Goodnight Squishy.”

“Did you just call me Squishy?” Harry demanded.

“Yes, I did.”

After a couple seconds of seriously debating whether he really wanted to know, Harry asked, “Why exactly are you calling me Squishy?”

“I call you Squishy because that’s how you died, you fell from a tower and went squish.” Tom explained. These days he was either pissed off for no apparent reason arguing with inanimate objects or talking in a manner that you would expect someone of about five years old to talk. Needless to say, it was a bit creepy.

April 4

The Lord Voldemort everyone knew before had been deformed and pushed to the back of his mind, all that was left was a part of the thought processes he knew, his ideals, and some twisted part of his brain that saw things and heard things that weren’t there. The real Voldemort was still there, deep, deep down, but he was there all the same. Ready for something to come that would bring part of his mentality back. From the second he woke up this morning and noticed that his personal consultant/ghost was not with him he knew something was going to happen today. By ten in the morning he was arriving in his black cloaks in the middle of Hogsmeade, which was suspiciously empty. Voldemort noticed this, Lord Fish Head did not.

Voldemort had taken the stupid name his ghost had given him and used it for the insane state of mind that had taken over his body.

They walked to the castle where Severus Snape and Alecko Carrow, who had looked unnerved around him since the death of his brother, greeted him. Severus bowed low greeting him as master, Alecko refused to bow low enough that she couldn’t see both of his hands. She feared death, every death eater feared death to an extent, but

none as much as Voldemort. Lord Fish Head could really care less about the issue.

“Another message has been left?” Voldemort frowned at how enthused Lord Fish Head sounded, “Where is it?”

“Great Hall,” Severus said and opened the wide door to let his master through first, Voldemort and Lord Fish Head both agreed that they liked this treatment. When they got to the next door, Alecko was glared at until she opened the door for him. His eyes were immediately caught by the blood red words and Voldemort inched towards the surface to think about this.

It looks like blood, but it probably isn't, it's just to catch my attention. The others were done in black, charcoal if I'm not mistaken. And there hasn't been one for months. Is that little harpy planning something? Okay, think, the actual message: When was the last time you saw the snake's locket? Snake... Nagini? No, Nagini doesn't have a locket. The basilisk? No, the basilisk is dead, Ginny was possessed by the basilisk, she knows of it's death. Think, think, think... The Slytherin coat of arms is a snake...

### Slytherin's Locket

Wait, no, there's no way she can know about that. No one can know about that. I never told a soul, because I can't die, I just can't. I'm too young to die! If they know about the locket, do they know about the others? What if they're already destroyed? Maybe I'm no longer immortal, maybe I could be killed right now. I'm not ready to face death!

Something wet ran down their face, and a pale hand wiped it away. A tear. He was crying. He had never cried before, unless you call crocodile tears crying, but he didn't think that they did. He was shaking too, before now his death had been nominal, an impossibility, and now he could die. And he was scared.

‘Put yourself together!’ Voldemort yelled at himself, ‘We don’t even know if they are all destroyed, besides, Nagini is safe. We’re fine for now, we just have to check the horcruxes. And Dark Lords don’t cry!’

Voldemort was taking over from now on, he blinked away the tears and firmly composed himself before storming out the room. He was going to check his horcruxes, going around to each one, ending with the diadem that would lead him back to Hogwarts. Then he would kill that damned Weasley girl. Afterwards he would replenish his stock of horcruxes, then kill the rest of the Weasleys, after his ghost’s advice he knew that the lot of them were trouble waiting to happen. Especially that Percy kid, it’s always the quiet ones that end up causing you the most trouble.

Damn, I need a house elf, Voldemort remembered. He turned on his heel and demanded that Severus give him a house elf. Severus gave his apologies and said that there was only one house elf free that day, old Finky. Voldemort rolled his eyes, no, that was Lord Fish Head that used such a weak expression considering the fact he was supposed to be a dark lord. Finky grumbled as he was whisked from Hogwarts, and eventually to his death, by the Dark Lord that the house elves detested.

Severus watched them leave in a detached way, and then turned to Aleto, “I told you he wouldn’t kill us, Aleto.”

“Doesn’t stop him from coming back to kill us, he’s gone over the deep end Severus. He was crying for Merlin’s sake! That’s not normal.” Aleto grumbled.

“You’re just upset because he killed your brother.”

“He never even gave Amycus a chance.”

“He did, he chose to join the Dark Lord, in doing that he agreed to do whatever the Dark Lord bade him to do. It didn’t work out well for him,” Snape explained and his eyes flashed past her shoulder, “It doesn’t seem that it will work out well for you either, Aleto.”

Alecto was confused until she turned to see what Severus had been looking at. A wall of students made a half circle around her, two students deep, with representatives from each house. Each held a sardonic grin that implied that they were about to do something that was against the rules and they were going to enjoy it. She backed up slowly, hoping to be able to run for it. Severus' hand stopped her from moving backwards, the traitor.

"Sorry Alecto, but you have chosen your loyalties, and I have chosen mine. Don't worry, they won't kill you." Severus said, but he didn't say that they wouldn't insult, annoy or harm her. She was disarmed and then carried off by the students, up the stairs and out of sight.

"Thank you Severus, that was much more dramatic that way." Ginny said from next to him, Luna, Neville and the seven Slytherins behind her.

"Don't tell me you guys don't want to see her tied up in a closet." Severus said, wondering why these people had held back from the others.

"Professor, we didn't join the SET so that we could disarm and incapacitate an old hag who's made bad choices in her life." Crabbe said, Snape was personally surprised that not only had Crabbe used a full sentence, but it had actually made him come off as intelligent. Where did that come from?

"We joined the SET to avenge our friends' deaths, and she didn't cause them, the Dark Lord did. He is the one who must pay." Goyle added. Once again, where was this the previous seven years?

"We're saving our energy for the battle tomorrow." Neville said proudly, far from the shy young screw up he was first year.

"We're breaking away from our parents who want to make all of the decisions about our lives." Pansy said, convincing Snape that she wasn't just a malicious gossiping teenager, she was a malicious gossiping teenager that could think for herself.



“We will not lose tomorrow, we can’t.” Ginny said, no desperation in her voice. She hadn’t always been the most confident, smart, or skilled Weasley, but she was more determined than anyone he had ever met.

She was right, they wouldn’t lose. Not with her on their side. Not with any of these ten on their side.

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(A/N: Okay, yeah, Voldemort having multiple personality issues, hallucinations and stuff is semi-crack fic, and I went a little overboard on April Fool’s day. I am finding that I really like writing the Slytherins in the SET. No, Ginny hasn’t told them that Draco might be alive, because she’s not really sure herself. For those of you who are confused, Naum and Tonks(a.k.a. Nymmie) will be a pairing, and Draco and Ginny will also be a pairing. As for what will happen to Stalker... I haven’t decided what his punishment will be. I am expecting this to go another five, maybe six chapters. In light of Voldemort’s rants, virtual peaches to all reviewers, or, if you would like to annoy Voldemort, I have a small supply of virtual apples and cranberries if you would prefer!)

Five in morning on the fifth of April Rodolfus Lestrangle was rudely disrupted by the Dark Lord bursting into the kitchen and demanding that he come with him. Rodolfus was confused, but in the moods that the Dark Lord had been in lately, he didn't want to risk any questions. He held his coffee with a death grip as he was led outside of the apparition wards and he and the Dark Lord apparated to Diagon Alley. Once he finished his coffee and was awake enough to deal with the unruly Dark Lord, he asked, "So what is it exactly that we're doing here."

The Dark Lord glared at him, and in all the years of knowing him, Rodolfus had seen nothing so close to the brink of insanity. Or perhaps beyond that but, no. If he was insane at this point in time, he would already be dead. However, the Dark Lord did answer, "I hope you haven't forgotten that item I told you to keep safe. I need reassurance that you have done so."

Rodolfus thought back to the first war, something he had tried to avoid since Bella's death because that was when they had dated and married. He had a vague memory of the Dark Lord giving him a golden cup that he claimed was of utmost important to keep safe for an indefinite amount of time. Rodolfus had put it in the ancient family vault that hadn't been touched since his father had brought him there when he was a child to receive his grandfather's wand. Rodolfus now wondered why the Dark Lord had waited until now to check on it instead of when he was returned to his body.

Without another word Rodolfus walked into Gringotts and up to a goblin asking for entrance to his family's vault. He and the Dark Lord took the cart down to the deepest levels where the cart finally stopped, the Goblin helped them out then held his lamp out to a empty corridor littered with rope. The goblin swore vehemently and added, "A vault has been broken into."

The Dark Lord was furious beyond words, but Rodolfus had kept the ability to speak, "How can you tell?"

The goblin cast him a dark look, "I doubt someone came this far to steal the blind dragon that's usually here. They must have taken something from the vaults."

“Open the Lestrangle vault. Now!” The Dark Lord commanded, and Rodolfus was sure that he heard desperation in his voice. How very unlike the Dark Lord.

The goblin opened the door and Rodolfus told the dark Lord that the contents were cursed to anyone without a direct blood tie to the family. He looked where he had put the cup on his last visit, the cup wasn't there. It must have fallen, it must have rolled across the room, the piles of gold must have fallen and buried it, it must have glued itself to the ceiling- Okay, now he was just being ridiculous. The cup was gone and he didn't know how he was going to get out of this alive.

“Master, I...” Rodolfus flinched as he saw the eyes of his master, somewhere between silent fury and fear.

“It's not there.” The Dark Lord said... well, darkly.

“I'm sorry master, I don't know how this could have happened, how can I make amends for this?”

“You can start by shutting you mouth and letting me think.” The Dark Lord said thinking. First the locket, then the ring, then the cup, the diary was long gone, Nagini would be fine at the Malfoy Manor because no one could have known, but the diadem... If whoever it is doing this had found the previous three, would they know about the diadem as well? No, the diadem's been lost for ages. No, right now, we're expecting the worse. They know about the diadem(hypothetically, Lord Fish Head argued), what is their next move? Right, if they know about the diadem they would have guessed it to be at Hogwarts. I need to check on it, I could send a minion. No, then I'd have to explain myself, Dark Lords don't explain themselves to minions. I'll go myself, but they'd be expecting me. I know, an army of the dead! No, it's sunny, infiri will never work. Wait, I have minions! Okay, it's not that exciting, freak of nature Lord Fish Head...

Rodolfus watched the Dark Lord start walking off and decided that it was best not to ask what was going on now. He was in one of his funny moods like last week when he was having a conversation with a toaster or the hundreds of times that he had talked to himself. And apparently been answered. Also, the Dark Lord currently had a murderous glint in his eyes. Best not to bother him when he's in the mood to kill.

Alius Positus

"Rivers, thanks for not being stupid, just continue that and things should go well." Ginny said as she checked everyone's positions at a quarter to six. Almost everyone was awake, with a few exceptions of the younger children who had refused to go to bed early like she had suggested. Ginny had banned a few of the older kids who refused to get a decent amount of sleep the night before to the upper floors of the castle as well. She wasn't taking chances, not today.

"Come on Gin-gin, you're the head of this plan, it can't go wrong." Rivers said, "And you don't have to call me Rivers, you can call me Nathan or Nate."

Ginny looked at the kid, white-blond hair, pale blue eyes, and wearing very close to all white clothes. The picture of innocence, if you ignored the war-paint many had chosen to wear in a thick black line below each eye. She ruffled his hair fondly, "See you when hell's over, Nate."

She walked from the room as she heard the young kids gasp over her language, but all she could think of was how that innocence would be gone after today. If only she could have convinced them not to join the battle, but the best she could do was to employ her rules in hope that it would keep them safe. As she passed the others on the way down they all gave grim smiles a nod of reassurance. She took a black strip of cloth and tied it over her head to cover the circlet. Tom was crazy enough without the tease of a possible diadem. She stepped out into the brisk predawn air where thirty or so students and half the Hogwarts staff stood waiting for her to lead them to the lake.

The clock stroked six and in the distance the Order could be seen making their way to the lake, Sirius the unconscious leader of the group. Ginny picked out five of her brothers and her parents, every Weasley would be in this battle. Hopefully. And if things went well, all of them would walk away. The entire Order scanned their numbers, including those with brooms with great speculation. Sirius eyed Snape and the seven Slytherins, "What are they doing here? I thought we were all against Tom."

"We are, houses mean nothing. Everyone here trusts the eight of them, and if you don't you should either leave or I'd like to see you try to get past me." Ginny said cracking her knuckles. Sirius smiled, conceding to her request before walking over to Snape to shake his hand.

"Never thought I'd finally see the day when Slytherins got enough sense to be on our side, Snivellous." Severus rolled his eyes in reply.

"I've only been on your side for about seventeen years," Severus grumbled, and Sirius looked shocked, thinking back to what Harry had talked to him about the Christmas before last. It was about Snape liking Lily... and he'd been on the Light side since about the time that Lily had been killed. That's why Wolf had told him he'd helped him more than he knew, but had been slightly creeped out at the same time. Harry...

"What are we waiting for?" Moody asked Ginny.

"About that..." Ginny said averting her eyes from the group, "I don't really know, the letter on the back of the letter I sent you is all the information I have besides something I read in December. All I can do is act under what I know, and all I know is that Tom is supposed to attack today. I helped out in part of a plan to start this, I think, but I don't know any other part of this plan. I'm not even sure if they're going to come."

"So they're might be a battle today? That's a lot of preparation if it turns out to be nothing." Naum said making Ginny raise an eyebrow and walk over to him.

“You’re new, so I won’t go so hard on you,” Ginny said, “I’ve known about this since December. If the information is from who I think it is, and my heart tells me it is, there will be a fight today. Besides, I baited him two days ago. He will be here, and there will be a fight. Got it?”

“Uh, yeah.” Naum replied.

Ginny rolled her eyes, “Bulgarians.”

It was quiet for a few minutes as people resigned themselves to waiting for the fight to start, which was a very uncomfortable situation.

Alius Positus

“Okay, Vaughn, stand by the SET with the cloak on, and be careful, the cloak doesn’t repel spills, but you know that.” Wolf said nervously, “Ron and Draco, keep out of sight in the forest. Hermione, you’re staying with Firesong who will fly you in, I still don’t understand why you’re okay with the dragon and not a broom. I know you guys have known this for days, but, I just need to say it out loud to keep sane.”

“And what are you doing, you haven’t told us.” Vaughn asked, “Hopefully it isn’t stupid.”

“Thinking back, almost everything we’ve done so far could be characterized as stupid.” Wolf sighed, “I’m going to walk in from the Whomping Willow, though most of this depends on Tom freaking out and our side accepting it, at least to a degree.”

“What if they don’t?” Draco asked.

“Uh, let’s just say that it won’t be a pleasant experience that will involve complete chaos and high death rates.” Wolf said uneasily, “If we plan on pulling this off, we need to get into our positions now. Good luck.”

As Wolf began walking off towards the Shrieking Shack, Vaughn threw the Invisibility cloak over herself and mumbled, "May the force be with us all. Damn, of all the times to be quoting Star Wars."

Alius Positus

"Get your wands out, here they come." Ginny said drawing her wand from her pocket as she saw the group of death eaters come over the hill that led to the lake and Hogwarts. Ginny saw that The Dark Lord looked unnerved, he definitely wasn't in prime condition for fighting, he had dark circles under his eyes and seemed to be a small push away from a nervous break down. Ginny took a few steps forward, she wasn't the one planning this out, but she was going to pretend to be in front of Tom. She was very aware of small sounds behind her, student shuffling with anticipation, the unsteady nervous breathing, the Order trying to convince her parents that she knew what she was doing when truth be told, she was winging it.

Tom's eyes narrowed, glancing at the castle for a mere moment before focusing on her again. He stopped his death eaters fifty feet away and swept across half the distance before waiting for Ginny to meet him in the middle. Before battle negotiations, Ginny had almost expected him to do this. She imagined him saying something along the lines of 'if you stop the resistance, I'll let your family live.' She wouldn't concede, Voldemort was out-numbered and overpowered. They would not lose. She walked up to him, frowning in disapproval that couldn't be mistaken for any other emotion.

"Ginevra Weasley," Voldemort greeted as she stopped a few feet away.

"Little Tommy Riddle." She glared back while crossing her arms.

She saw his jaw stiffen, her comment had bothered him. He didn't relent, "It's foolish to waste the blood of so many purebloods. Surrender and you will all be left mostly unharmed."

"Mostly unharmed? What the hell is that supposed to mean?" Ginny demanded.

Voldemort really didn't appreciate having anything demanded of him, "It means all the other students will go unharmed as long as their leader and their cause dies."

"No,"

"Afraid of death, little girl?"

"First of all, who are you calling a little girl? At least I wasn't killed by an infant," Ginny said bitterly, "I'm not afraid of death, if my death could bring you off of that throne you massacred your way to, I wouldn't hesitate to do so. The SET and I will fight until you are defeated."

Voldemort thought for a minute, "So sad that one with such dedication as you do has chosen to be my enemy rather than my ally, though you could always change that. Will you join me?" He held out a hand for her to take his hand and accept his offer.

Ginny kept her face blank as she seemed to consider his offer. She reached her hand out, then grabbed his forearm and pulled him close enough to hear her whisper in his ear, "You are despicable, trying to get one of the people that abominates you to join you. Tell me, is this because you feel weak, because you feel vulnerable? Because you could die? Either way it doesn't matter. I'll join you when hell freezes over."

When she was done talking to him she threw him to the ground where he fell in an ungraceful heap on the ground. Chocolate brown eyes met crazy crimson ones. Ginny had hit a nerve, and then embarrassed him. Not only had the death eaters watched their almighty master thrown to the ground, but he had been thrown to the ground by a girl half of his size. So it was no surprise that at a silent motion from Voldemort, she was disarmed by one of the death eaters and found another one twisting her arms behind her back and holding a dagger to her throat. It was Malfoy, Lucius Malfoy who spoke in an uncertain voice, "Master, shall I kill her?"



“No,” Voldemort spat, “I want her death long and drawn out. Slow and painful.”

“Wrong answer.” Came two male voices at once from the forest, one wand pointed at Voldemort, the other coldly pointed at Lucius.

“Ron!” Many voices called as they recognized the slightly aged Ron Weasley. His hair had grown out and his skin had grown marginally darker from spending so long near the equator. He now had his wand pointed at the Dark Lord with absolutely no compassion. This Ron was not afraid to kill.

As for the other, it took his mother to finally recognize him and out of shock she softly crooned, “Draco?” The entire battle field grew silent as they looked at the blonde who’d grown lankier and had recently let his hair go a bit on the wild side, who seemed to be back from the dead. The Weasley’s threw a silent uproar at the fact that his wand was pointed at his own father, protectively insuring Ginny’s safety.

“Draco, you’re alive...” Narcissa took a few steps towards her son, “How?”

“I breathe, eat, keep a livable temperature and don’t allow people to kill me. The last is harder than you’d think. Dad, unless you want your head blown off, let her go.” Draco said darkly.

Lucius saw a glint in his son’s eyes, and quickly dropped the dagger and took a few steps away from Ginny who had her wand returned to her after Ron accio’d it from the death eater who had disarmed her that was openly gaping at the-boy-who-was-thought-to-be-dead. Lucius approached Draco cautiously, “But you fell off the tower...”

“I had my wand, and before you say that I didn’t, that wand was a fake. I never died.” Draco announced.

“So which side are you on?” Narcissa asked.

“Not ickle Tommy over there. Not for years. If you had brains, you wouldn’t be either.” Draco said.

“What are you standing around for, kill them!” Voldemort shouted desperately raising his own wand to kill one of the Malfoys(they were standing close enough together that it was hard to tell). As wands were raised there was a whooshing sound through the air followed by a muffled thump. The sleeve of Voldemort’s wand was attached to the ground with a knife and his wand lay several inches from his reach. Voldemort’s eyes grew wide as he looked at the source of the knife.

Vaughn stood with the invisibility cloak at her feet, wand in her right hand, and another knife in her left, with two more knives tucked into her belt. Vaughn had grown a shade closer to Harry and Sable’s personalities, with a glint in her eye that merciless when it came to the safety of those closest to her. Deep down the whole Pack had it, except for the ex-member of the Pack who will not be named. Git. Vaughn gave a demonic grin that reminded everyone far to much of the one’s the Cornish pixies that Lockhart had tried to show them(and failed), “Nice to see you again, Tommy. I’m sorry about your hand, did I do that?” If her voice was anything to go by, she wasn’t sorry at all.

Meanwhile, Sirius was horribly failing at not staring openly with his mouth open. She had left a suicide note! She hadn’t been seen for over a year and now she’s back. And Draco didn’t die? What the hell is going on?

Voldemort pulled his sleeve free by ripping it and grabbed his wand before standing to face the new arrival that was also supposed to be dead. We’re they all just popping out of the ground? He shook the question to the back of his mind, “Should I expect anyone else to try to attack me?”

“Yeah, a few. I would move if I were you.” Vaughn said still smiling. Voldemort looked confused and Vaughn pointed to the sky where students were watching with awe as a huge pale dragon flew around the castle breathing fire as she descended. Voldemort hurried out of the way before he was squished by the huge creature.

“Wow,” Charlie said with a smile on his face, “Rarest kind of dragon, probably last of it’s kind. Mix between an Arctic Blind dragon and a Chinese Fireball. Isn’t she beautiful?”

“Yeah,” Hagrid agreed as several students stood back from the strange creature. The dragon stooped low to let it’s passenger off. Hermione brushed a few hairs that had loosed themselves from her ponytail, then pulled her wand out. The dragon took a short flight to the other side of the death eaters.

Hermione looked at Voldemort with determination, “You seem to be surrounded Tom, are you sure that you don’t want to give up now? We’ll kill you quickly if you do.”

Voldemort glared at her and spoke in a low tone, “I will not surrender, mudblood.”

“You bastard,” Vaughn growled, “I’m a muggle born too, the least you could do is treat us the same, but you should treat us with some respect seeing as we could kill you right now without feeling guilty about it. You deserve to die.”

Voldemort seemed thrown off and then looked in the distance, “At least you aren’t alive, I can deal with the others.”

Meanwhile, in Nicaragua

“Damn, this place is a mess.” One of the rescue men said wading in waist high water.

“A hurricane just hit this place, what to you expect?” A women nearby said before swearing fluently.

“What is it Chel?” The man asked.

“Manuel, this guy, he’s mangled. This isn’t natural.” Chel replied pointing at a man on a piece of floating plywood. His eyes were open and glazed over, both of his arms and legs were broken in at least one place that could be seen from the unnatural angles. A splinter of

wood went completely through his right leg. Another larger piece was protruding from his chest.

“Damn, wonder what this guy did to deserve this.” Manuel said walking over to the guy and carefully searched the man’s pockets for ID. He pulled a waterlogged wallet from the man’s pocket. “Shoot, Orphan’s ID. Protected too, it has a fake name and no last name.”

“Stalker? Guy must have a bad reputation. No home address. Poor guy.” Chel said, “Let’s get him over to the ambulance.”

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(A/N: Everyone seemed to want bad things to happen to Stalker, so, is dying in a hurricane bad enough? Like I said, this is coming to an end. Everyone who keeps reviewing, you guys are beyond awesome. Because of this, the next chapter will be posted tomorrow(Monday) at about four o’clock in my time zone. Thank you for being wonderful readers!)

They were all supposed to be dead. Malfoy, Weasley, what's her name scary girl, and that frizzy-haired mudblood. Sure, what's her name scary girl was a mudblood as well, but he was afraid of what she might do if he called her that. Voldemort thought over what had happened so far, his troubles had all started with him deciding to offer Weaselette a chance at joining him. 'I'll join you when hell freezes over.' Why did Lord Fish Head make him say that? He should have known that the proud girl would never join him, but how had she guessed his inner thoughts so precisely. And she had been at Hogwarts too long to have been able to do anything too rebellious. She wasn't working alone, it wasn't possible.

Then when he had made Lucius capture the girl two more people had jumped from the trees, Malfoy and Weasley, long time rivals. Weasley hadn't been seen for months, and he was last seen with death eaters, Lord Fish Head hadn't doubted his death had occurred along with Granger's. Never even thought to ask which of his death eaters had done it. More surprising was Malfoy, who he had seen dead with his own eyes long before Lord Fish Head even came into the picture. How the hell was he still alive? More than that, he had shifted his parents from being on the Dark side to being neutral bystanders that were leaning towards the Light. Damn Draco.

Then Vaughn had come along, the girl who loved Harry bloody Potter enough to kill herself after his death. But now she was alive, armed, pissed, and one of the scariest things he had ever seen. He could still win though.

Then that (censored) mudblood came in with that (censored) dragon and nearly landed on me. It might just be me, but that's (censored) rude.

Now I look over and there's Harry bloody Potter standing there with a smug little smile on face of his. Like he's won or something, but he's dead. Wait, why can everyone else see him now? Perhaps he's acting like a real ghost now instead of like some creepy stalker-ghost.

"I-it's Harry P-potter," Peter squeaked. Seriously, he squeaked. Peter is such a bad excuse for a grown man.

“Stupify!” Harry said whipping out his wand, stunning Peter who promptly fell to the ground. Harry rolled his eyes, “You have no idea how long I’ve wanted to do that.”

“But you’re... you’re dead, you’re a ghost, how the hell can you do magic?” I demanded, there was something unnatural going on here.

“Poor, poor, little Tom. Too insane to even realize that you’ve already been defeated. I won from the second you saw me and lied to Peter by saying you couldn’t see me.” Harry said having difficulty not laughing, “I only died once, and by doing that, I only made you more vulnerable. Then I helped Draco who was secretly on my side to fake his death and we both pretended to be dead. Then we go the other three together and went about planning your downfall.”

I just stared, they faked their deaths. Everyone was fooled. They got Vaughn to fake her death. They even made everyone, including me, think that death eaters had killed Weasley and Granger. It was... Genius. Who would be looking for dead people?

“I can’t believe that you believed that a real ghost could only be seen by one person. Of course, what coward would worry about the afterlife when he had made himself immortal. I tweaked legilemency a bit, all you could see was my soul, and since I was going through your mind, only you could see me. Meanwhile, my body was protected halfway around the world.” Harry was now openly smirking, “And you trusted me, I became your friend, I made you kill your best duelists. I was your conscience. Of course, that was after I got rid of them, the diary, the ring, the locket, the cup, the diadem, and last but not least, Nagini.”

I followed his gaze to this dark line against the bright green grass, it was Nagini spread along the ground. Red separated her body and her head with the sword of Gryffindor embedded in the ground like a cross. How had this happened? Damn, Potter knew where she was and knew I wasn’t there to protect her. He’s won... No, I can still win, “Avada Kadavra!”

“Crucio!” Potter yelled as he side-stepped my spell. Then I felt the spell I had used so often hit me. The pain was incredible, before I had even registered what had happened I was collapsing on the ground screaming in pain. Just as suddenly as it began, it was over. Potter was now standing over me, with a strange look of pity on his face, “Do you still think you can win? Even if you managed to kill me, there’s over a hundred people here that want you dead. You wouldn’t make it out of here alive.”

“He has us.” Goyle Sr. said stepping forward with several other people.

The Slytherin students stepped forward, wands drawn and pointing at their parents. Other students began walking around and slowly surrounding the group, then the Order joined in. Small duels began, and the death eaters were dropping like flies. The most effective thing that happened was a quidditch player swooping down and dumping a dungbomb in the middle of the death eaters. Even though he was wearing goggles and formless quidditch robes, Ginny still recognized Nate Rivers as the perpetrators. The battle was keeping people distracted enough that very few people were watching Wolf and Voldemort duel. Okay, to be truthful, Voldemort was sending any and every spell he could think of at Wolf who was dodging them and tiring Voldemort out.

A green flash of light caught everyone’s attention as it connected with Voldemort’s chest.

Wolf watched Voldemort’s eyes from the second that the spell came off the tip of his wand. Everything slowed as Voldemort recognized the spell and realized he was going to die in less than a second. He blinked once and suddenly his eyes were filled with understanding, he understood that when he had killed so many people, they had known for a mere second death was coming. He was sorry, for once in his pitiful life, Tom Riddle. He wasn’t Voldemort anymore, Voldemort was evil, Voldemort never felt sorry for anything, but Tom Riddle did. He was understanding of victims and wouldn’t be able to kill another being now that he had a conscience.

For the last millisecond of his life.

The life disappeared from his eyes and he fell backwards onto the ground. He was dead. Voldemort was dead. Tom Riddle was dead. Lord Fish Head was dead. Wolf had killed again, and he felt bad about it. Killing Bellatrix hadn't been so bad, she had just killed Remus and after that there was the hell hole of the misunderstanding that led him to destroying the horcrux within. But now... the only thing he could do was stare at the body. How could he feel bad about killing a dictator and mass murderer?

Voldemort was dead, he could live a normal life. Not in the magical world though, he would be able to propose to Vaughn, get married. He could get a job, work for a living, start a family. He could do anything he wanted to with his life. He was free.

The entire Hogwarts grounds erupted in cheers, family, friends, people that usually weren't fond of, teachers, students and even Firesong celebrated. Okay, Firesong was just happy because Charlie was promising to take her to live with other dragons. Wolf noticed that Vaughn was pulling herself out of a vision, afterwards she ran up to him and threw her arms around him without seeing a word. He hugged her back without a second thought, "What was your vision?"

"Can't tell."

"Why not?"

"You'll see."

"It's not morbid, I hope."

"No, it's actually the best vision I've ever had."

"Better than seeing Voldemort cry?"

"Yeah, ten times better." Vaughn said, reluctantly letting him go now that Sirius was walking up.



“Harry... you’re alive. Why did you fake your death?” Sirius asked, with a look between sadness and happiness on his face.

“Sirius, I couldn’t kill my friend and he couldn’t kill me. I didn’t have much of a choice. We both had to be assumed dead. I’m sorry.” Sirius soon found himself being hugged by Wolf, who was sincerely sorry.

“You don’t have to apologize for faking your death as long as you never do it again, that goes for you too, Vaughn,” Sirius said, and Vaughn just joined the hug.

Meanwhile...

“Come on Severus, are you afraid of a little group hug?” McGonagall teased.

“First of all, there is nothing little about twenty-some people hugging each other,” Severus shot back, “Secondly, I don’t do hugs.”

The small group of Slytherins behind him got wicked smiles on their faces and Pansy said, “But professor, I think we have to disagree with you on that.”

“What is that supposed to-“ Snape was interrupted by seven students plastering his arms to his sides. After a few seconds of shock he started to get free, “Let me go you conniving little miscreants!”

Somewhere else...(Warning: Fluff and death threats ahead)

Lucius and Narcissa Malfoy finally let their son free, but he was still subject to their questions. Lucius asked, “How long have you been against You-know-who?”

“Dad, call him Voldemort, you can’t be afraid of a dead guy,” Draco said, “I joined the SET at the beginning of fifth year.”

“And you didn’t tell us because?” Narcissa prompted.

“You two were trying to get me to join Voldemort, you called yourselves his most faithful followers. What was I supposed to do? Chance that you would kill me or lock me in the dungeon?” Draco asked.

“Dungeon? We have a dungeon?” Narcissa asked.

“I think there’s one somewhere, I’ve never spent time looking for it.” Lucius shrugged.

“Besides Draco, we’d never lock you in a dungeon, we love you too much.” Narcissa said running a hand through his ungelled hair.

Draco pulled away, “Comforting,” he said sarcastically, “You love me too much to lock me in a dungeon, but you choose to say nothing about killing me.”

“Oh, right, we wouldn’t do that either, I guess.” Lucius said, but one look at his face proved that he was joking around.

“Malfoy!” Ginny yelled, in a not entirely unfriendly way as she loped towards the group.

“Which one?” Draco asked.

“You Draco, get over here.” She said stopping and waiting for him to come closer.

Draco sighed and excused himself from his parents and went to her. He knew that this was going to happen, and that didn’t make him dread it any less, “What do you want to talk to me about?”

“Why did you do it?”

“Why did I do what?”

“You know exactly what I’m talking about.”

“I do?”

“Yes you do.”

“Are you sure?”

“Stop playing dumb.”

“What makes you think I’m playing dumb?”

“Stop it, just tell me why the hell you almost killed your own father to save me.”

“Uh, pass?”

“There is no ‘pass’, just answer the question!”

“I plead the fifth?”

“What the hell is the ‘fifth’ and why would you want to plead it?”

“It’s the fifth amendment in the United States, that pretty much says that I refuse to speak because if I do I might further incriminate myself.”

“No.”

“Yes it is, I researched it myself.”

“No, I meant you aren’t allowed to plead the fifth. Tell me why you were so set on saving me.”

“Do I have to?”

“Yes, you have to, otherwise I will kill you with three toothpicks and a tube of toothpaste.”

“How would you do that?”

“Do you want me to show you?”

“... I'd rather not.”

“I didn't think so.”

“...”

“...”

“...”

“Why aren't you talking?”

“About what?”

“Draco!”

“What!”

“Do you want to die a slow and painful death?”

“Not really.”

“Then answer my question.”

“What question?”

“Why were you so intent on saving me?”

“Oh, that question...”

“Yes, that question.”

“I'll tell you as long as you promise not to kill me after I answer it.”

“I promise.”

“Or get your parents to kill me.”

“I won’t.”

“Or your brothers.”

“I promise, I promise, just tell me why.”

“While I was gone I heard about Krum and everything you were doing to defeat Voldemort then I remembered how cute and smart and strong and beautiful and intelligent and pretty you are and started to think about you and realized that I really like you as in really really like you but what do I know about love and then Ron yelled at me for the next month and then finally decided he would prefer it to be me than some old pedophile Bulgarian so he consented as long as you were happy and then my father was threatening to kill you and I can’t imagine a world without you and I could imagine a life without my father and I freaked out and was just about to kill him unnecessarily and didn’t because then you’d hate me and now I’m rambling and feel like an effing idiot so you can just yell at me to go away and wallow in my own brokenhearted misery and that’s why I saved you don’t kill me.”

“... Uh, I’m sorry, that was probably a wonderful explanation, but I couldn’t understand a single word of it.”

“Okay, to put it simply,” Draco sighed and closed his eyes, “I love you.”

Draco didn’t hear a word, and eventually chanced a look at Ginny with her flowing red hair and black halo. She was frozen as if unsure about what to do. Finally she shook the trance off, “So you... like me?”

“Yes.”

“Really like me?”

“Yes.”

“As in really, really like me?”

“Yes, I do.”

“You love me?”

“Yes, I really do.”

She was quiet for a second and then yelled, “Harry!”

Dammit, she hadn’t promised that she wouldn’t make Harry kill him.

“Yeah, Ginny?” Harry replied from quite a ways away.

“ Nothing!” She called back and then hugged Draco, which completely caught him off guard, “Sorry, I just had to make you sweat with that. I like you too. Perhaps we could date?”

“I’d like that.”

“I’m sure you would.”

Elsewhere...

“So, uh, Nymmie?”

“Yeah, Naum?”

“Will you go out with me?”

“What the hell, sure.”

“Yipee!”

“Okay, that’s enough of that.”

“Can I do this instead?”

...

“Naum?”

“What?”

“Did you just kiss me?”

“... Yeah, did you not want me to?”

“Just wait until we go on our first date to do that again, ‘kay Skippy?”

“Sure, but why are you calling me Skippy?”

“Because you’re skipping.”

“Oh.”

-

(A/N: See, I posted on time! Tada! By the way, if you think the name Nate Rivers is funny and know where I got it from, you will get a special mention in my next chapter’s author’s note. The official chapter count will be fifty-four. Hopefully I won’t cry when I post the next chapter. Knowing me, I will. Next chapter will be really short, the one after is the epilogue that will take place thirteen years after Voldemort was defeated. Oh, and the remaining members of the Pack will have a cute and funny reunion that I have been planning since... March? Yeah, about March. Reviewers get virtual hugs whether they want them or not(I will send maliciously hugging Slytherins after you, they know where you live!). Lemonbomber out.)

The entire school had been in chaos most of the day, especially since the Gryffindors and Ravenclaws watched the battles, and they snuck out of their dormitories to tell their friends in other houses that it was over. After the death eaters that were convicted had been taken to the ministry to stand trial on another date, everyone in the school was invited to the Great Hall to hear Harry's explanation of things. Which of course sparked an argument.

"What do you mean I promised an explanation?" Harry asked Ginny.

"I promised them one, and I have no idea what's going on, so you're explaining everything." Ginny said.

"That doesn't even make sense."

"You're just saying that because you don't like talking in front of large groups."

"What are you on? I have no trouble talking in front of groups. I just don't want to spend some three days explaining everything to everyone."

"Pretend it's a story, just tell them your life story. No one knows anything about you anyways. They've always wondered."

"So now I'm telling them my life story?"

"Tell it in third person if it helps."

"Talking in third person makes you sound like you have a mental disorder."

"Since when have you cared what people think about you?"

"Good point." Harry said then pointed at Draco, Ron, Hermione and Vaughn, "Come on,"



“How did we get dragged into this?” Vaughn argued, but followed anyway.

“Because I got dragged into this, and I’m going to spread the misery.” Harry said going to the Head Table that had remained empty throughout the day. The room was an amazing mix of people actually. At the usual Hufflepuff table, the Hufflepuffs and Slytherins were talking, and the Ravenclaws were hosting the Gryffindors as well. The Staff took up the Slytherin table, and the Order took up the Gryffindor table. Finally, houses didn’t really matter anymore. Of course, Harry would never get used to Sirius and Severus getting along. It was something akin to bird being friends with a bird, it was unnatural.

Everyone stopped talking after a minute and started looking on the five at the head table with interest. Harry sighed realizing that he would have to start this torture eventually, “Well, I know that many of you have been involved with the final battle and want to know why the hell what happened happened, but you’re going to have to wait a while. Some things I decided to do were... unusual at best, and that’s because my upbringing were unusual. Last year before Dumbledore died he informed me that no one ever knew that I wasn’t being brought up by my relatives until I went to Hogwarts. I’m going to tell you what my life was before Hogwarts before telling you about this, and I apologize in advance for rambling on. I’ll try to make this interesting.”

Harry took a deep breath and began, “I’ve always been told that my parents were the best parents that ever lived. I wouldn’t know that, I was barely a year old when they died. When they died, I could have been taken in by my godfather, or my father’s best friend, but no, it was decided that I was to live my magiphobic relatives. Until I was three, I was just neglected, but then I was starved, beaten, and molested repetitively until I couldn’t take it anymore. I ran away when I was about eight years old and went to London. After about two weeks or something I was half dead, severely sick and stuck in a storm. I don’t specifically remember what happened, but I remember trying to get away from someone touching me and then being warm for the first time in years.”

“When I woke up I found myself with five other people, they called themselves Stalker, Lulu, Pyg, Sable and Ferret, and the oldest was nearly seventeen. We were all orphans that had had tragic lives and didn’t want to live in an orphanage for different reasons, fear of authorities, fear of being returned to relatives, fear of being taken from their sibling. Either way, they took me in and for the next two years I lived on the streets with those five as my family. I was educated far more than I would have in any school, I was taught to fight, I was taught to use weapons and I was taught to trust again. When I was almost eleven we were caught and taken to an orphanage and split up. I was adopted by Remus Lupin after only one day.”

“I was depressed, I didn’t talk, I didn’t eat, I flinched every time he said anything because I was afraid that he would turn out to be like my relatives. He never pushed anything onto me, just sat and talked even though he doubted I was listening, but I soaked in everything he said. When I went to Hogwarts, I guess I scared people because I refused to trust the adults there. I refused to trust them because they didn’t trust me. Dumbledore was especially bothered by this fact, he was so used to blind trust that when I doubted him as Voldemort had it scared him. And for the sake of cheese, it’s the name of a dead guy, why the hell are you flinching?” Wolf said rolling his eyes before continuing.

“I became friends with Hermione and Ron because they were kids that didn’t expect me to be more than just a kid. They were one of the few people who never thought of me as the-boy-who-lived. We banded together to save the sorcerer’s stone that year, and that’s when I first confronted Voldemort, if you’re going to flinch every time I say his name you’re going to find this to be a very long explanation.” Wolf said, “That summer I was reunited with my orphan friends and found that Vaughn was a witch. That year at school I was up against a basilisk that was being controlled by Voldemort’s (flinching) diary that was controlling two of my close friends Vaughn and Ginny. Keep the diary in mind, it’s important later.”

“Third year I faced dementors, learned how to repel them and taught my friends to do so as well. At the end of that year my

godfather was proved innocent, Peter was on the loose, and I had thought I had seen Voldemort (twitching) for the last time. Unfortunately, at the end of the triwizard tournament I was illegally entered in by a death eater, Voldemort (wincing) was brought back to full power, I was somehow able to save both Cedric and my life through some lucky turn of events.” Wolf shook his head, “The summer brought to dementors to downtown London to attack me and the person I’ve always considered to be an older sister. And I was nearly expelled for saving our lives because the ministry thought I was clinically insane for thinking Voldemort (shuddering) was alive. Of course, most people thought that wasn’t half as bothersome as the fact that I wouldn’t talk to my godfather. Or acknowledge his existence. At the time, all I saw him as was another adult that could potentially hurt me.”

“Fifth year I was introduced to Voldemort (quivering) being able to break in my mind, and I couldn’t stand having my mind invaded by an adult. At the time it didn’t really matter that it was the darkest wizard known to man trying to get in my head in order to kill me. I immediately found someone to teach me occlumency. Before that happened though, I saw myself in the Department of Mysteries trying to save someone, who turned out to be Remus Lupin who wasn’t even there. After that fight, Remus was dead and because of... bizarre circumstances, I was under the belief that I had no reason to live. So I set out to kill myself, or more accurately, get myself killed.”

“I used my mental connection with Voldemort (flinching) to find Voldemort, became an animagus to escape Grimauld Place, and ran away. When I got to Voldemort (twitching) I pretty much asked him to kill me, and he sent the killing curse at me. Then I was convinced in this limbo between life and death that I did in fact have something to live for and that I got to go back to life because a piece of soul caught inside me was killed, not me. And this is because I was so willingly accepting death. It was only later that I realized that it had to have been Voldemort’s (wincing) soul that had saved me. I did some research that summer and found out that I had been a horcrux since I was a year old.”

“A horcrux being a piece of soul ripped from the whole of the soul by the killing of innocent people and then placed in an object or person. There are very few things that can destroy them, and as long as one horcrux remains, the owner of the soul cannot be killed.” Hermione explained.

“The first horcrux was the diary, it was the piece of his soul that was possessing me and Ginny. Wo- Harry destroyed that with basilisk blood.” Vaughn added.

Wolf nodded slightly in thanks for them allowing him a short break, “We did research that summer and found out all we could on horcruxes. Compared with Voldemort’s (shuddering) general way of thinking, it was decided that he had broken his soul into seven pieces, seven because it’s the most magically powerful number. Only it was in eight pieces because he wouldn’t have been trying to kill me if I was the key to his immortality. Dumbledore had come to the same conclusion and had destroyed a third horcrux, Voldemort’s (several people twitched) grandfather’s ring, his connection to a pureblood. But there was something else going on at the same time.”

“Through the first year of the SET, I was secretly a member and I was their spy in the Inquisitorial Squad.” Draco spoke up, “Before joining I had a few friends, but these four along with Neville, Luna and, of course, Ginny became my best friends. That summer Voldemort (a few people flinched) asked, well ordered actually, that I kill Harry. The two of us talked and realized that at the end of this both of us would be dead, and neither of us wanted that. So we planned and practiced all year to fake our deaths and make sure no one interfered with our fight.”

“I personally have never forgiven myself for the actual deaths that day.” Wolf said quietly before speaking loudly again, “We ran to London, where Vaughn would likely commit suicide, we stopped her, collected Hermione and Ron and went searching for the remaining horcruxes. There was the locket of Slytherin that we found easily, near Christmas we broke into Gringotts and stole the Cup of Hufflepuff and a blind dragon, while the rest of our group accidentally found the diadem of Ravenclaw and then Draco and myself

pretended to be death eaters in order to give them an escape route without revealing that we were alive and lose the element of surprise. We apologize for that.”

“But... Who crucioed Ron?” One of the twins, Gred perhaps, asked.

“Well, I had to make it look realistic.” Wolf said in defense of himself, “After that point you may have noticed that Voldemort (only about five people shuddered this time, because after hearing one time after another they grew used to it) started to act strangely. That’s because I used legilimency to make it so he could see me as a ghost, and no one else could. I pretty much gave a slight push and he jumped off the deep end, that way I would have to fight an enemy that couldn’t reason. That’s why he was crazy enough to ask Ginny to join him. Among other things. Like killing his own followers, forgetting to protect Nagini, crying yesterday, blowing up a toaster that was apparently plotting against him, and wanting to be a sparkly Dark Lord. I... I can’t even describe to you how messed up that guy was. And that’s the story of my life. Any questions?”

From the group from the ministry that had arrived midway through the whole explanation, one old man who looked like he was about a decade past when he should have died spoke up, “When will you be taking over as minister?”

Harry blanched for a few seconds, then looked around to see if there was anyone else he could possibly mean. The old man just confirmed that he did mean Harry. Harry shook his head, “What the hell makes you think I would make a good minister?”

“You saved the world.” The old man replied.

“I also broke the law. Repeatedly. I’m not a good influence on people, I just killed a man in front of young impressionable children and don’t feel guilty about it. If I was minister I would probably end up killing everyone. Or at least the stupid people.” Harry pointed out, “You don’t want me as minister.”

The old man thought for a moment, "True, you don't seem to be one to have much patience. Though I will ask you to appoint the next minister."

Harry just stared at him for a moment as he thought. His eyes scanned over the order, one of them. They were older, had more experience, patience, and knew more about the world and knew what should be done to fix problems. His eyes rested for half a second on his choice and considered the man's reaction with his eyes closed. He smiled as he opened his eyes, "I would like appoint Sirius Black."

Sirius froze and blinked a few times as if to question whether he had heard it correctly. The old man pursed his lips, "You expect me to accept a criminal as our minister?"

"He's less of a criminal than I am, he's never even killed a man."

"He was convicted!"

"Not really, to be a true convict he would have had to not only do the crime, but have a trial. Which he didn't. He'd be a great minister." He then looked to Sirius, "You are okay with this, right?"

Sirius nodded, finally smiling when he realized his godson was showing support of him.

The old man's shoulders fell, "If you say so, we will trust you judgement."

Tempus praeter

"Sable!" Vuaghn said as she ran towards the man who hugged her back without a second thought. She was back, did anything else matter.

Wolf being back.

He felt Wolf hug him from the side as well. From what he'd heard the war had ended nine days ago, it had taken these two that long to get

away from that mess. He'd opened the door and quickly been embraced. He couldn't be happier. They finally pulled away from each other and he got a good look at them. Vaughn had recently cut her hair, it was only long enough to barely touch her shoulders and all the blue was gone from it. She definitely had a more mature nature. She also had four knives tucked into her belt. That was one of the things he was proudest of.

Wolf looked way older than he should have. He had dark skin under his eyes from days of doing the paperwork the end of the war had elicited, and he had a slight stubble and a tired look in his eyes. Sable was having a hard time with the fact that he was eight years older than Wolf and looked ten years younger than Wolf. Wolf also had no sign of a wand, but had his pocket knife in his front pocket, which could be seen by the odd bulge. When asked, Vaughn said something about telling them all at once with a peculiar look in her eyes.

"Vaughn," Lynn said from the back of the room.

"Wow, so, Stalker's here too?" Vaughn asked as she walked to hug her sister.

"No, he ran off with another girl." Lynn said quietly, she received a squeeze from his sister.

"Where exactly is he?" Wolf asked, accompanied with the familiar sound of his pocket knife opening. They all laughed, Lynn telling him that if she knew Sable had already offered to take care of it.

"Come on guys, Ferret wants to see you." Sable said smirking as he led them to the living room, that instead of one occupant, it had two.

"Oh, she's so cute!" Vaughn said and was pulled by some force to the almost two year old toddler on the floor trying to bite off a teddy bear's ear. The toddler had a bright pink bow tied in the black hair adorning it's head.

"Ferret, why do you keep putting the ribbon on Jet's head?"

“Because it’s cute, Sable.”

“He’s a guy though, he shouldn’t be wearing pink. It’s girly!”

“What about the pink shirt you wear?”

“I’m man enough to still look masculine wearing it. He’s almost two, a pink bow makes people assume he’s a girl.”

“Don’t be silly, he’ll be fine.”

“Next you’ll be getting him to play with dolls.

“What’s the difference between dolls and action figures?”

“One’s for boys, the other’s for girls.”

“And you think I’m being irrational? Fine, no dolls. What about make up?”

“Absolutely not.” Sable said, even though he knew she was just trying to get on his nerves. They kissed quickly before realizing that Wolf seemed to want a question answered.

“Sable, you think of Vaughn as your daughter, right?” Wolf asked.

Sable gave him a strange look, “Pretty much, just like I think you as a brother. Why do you ask?”

“Well, the question I have is one you’d generally ask a father, so since you’re as close as I can get, I’ll ask you.” Wolf looked nervous for half a second, “Can I have your blessing to marry Vaughn?”

Sable just looked at him, then glanced at Vaughn, who was presently pretending that she couldn’t hear them. Sable laughed, “You two were meant for each other, you had my blessing from the second you found each other seven years ago.”



“Thanks.” Wolf said before kneeling at Vaughn’s side and pulling three red roses from his coat, where they had miraculously stayed pretty. He got her attention and she looked at the roses, awestruck. He smiled and quietly said, “On a hot summer night, would you offer your throat to the Wolf with the red roses?”

Vaughn smiled, “Y-yes, what kind of idiot do you take me for?”

“Only thought it was polite to ask, even if the answer was obvious.” Wolf said, slipping a silver ring on her left ring finger. She just stared at it for a moment and then attacked him.

With a hug, not her knife. That would be wrong.

“It’s even better than it was in my vision.”

“Vaughn... Can’t... breathe...” Wolf choked before letting go.

“I had a feeling this is what you meant by leaving the wizarding world for a while.” Vaughn said, “From one journey to another.”

“From Cub to Wolf, and now Wolf to dad.” Sable said.

-

(A/N: Nooo! That’s the end. Minus a roughly five hundred word epilogue. If you want a sequel, please review and say so. Also, without going back and counting or using the ‘find word’ thing, how many times is Voldemort said in this. Closest guess gets a virtual cookie!)

September 1, 2009

“Mum, why did I have to come? I wanted to stay home and read.” A young girl with bright green eyes asked her mother, who rolled her eyes in response as she herded the girl and her older brother into King’s Cross station with a single trunk on a cart.

“Ivory, you know very well that you aren’t allowed to be home alone. And I’m not going to let you run around London either.” Vaughn answered quickly checking her watch again.

“You were running around London when you were my age.” Ivory said angrily.

“That’s completely different.”

“Is it?”

“I had supervision.”

“Grandpa isn’t supervision. You said that yourself.”

“Ivory, you do know that we aren’t even related to Sable.” Her brother said smugly.

“Doesn’t mean I can’t still call him grandpa.”

“It makes you wrong.”

“Yeah, well-“

“Enough,” Vaughn said sternly, “That means you too, Kris. Leave your sister alone, she’s mad enough that she can’t go this year.”

“Yeah, poor ivory has to go to a muggle school again this year.” Kris taunted, and received a sharp kick in the shin.

“Ivory, no kicking, Kris, no taunting. Got it?” Vaughn said, when both chanted that they did they crossed the barrier onto platform nine and three quarters. Even though it was Kris’ first year, they had gone to see Jet off enough that the barrier had become commonplace. Once through though, Ivory ran off once she saw something, “Ivory May, get back here!”

Vaughn knew Ivory didn’t hear her, she never did when Rebel was in the vicinity. Rebel Malfoy was Ginny and Draco’s youngest, a fair haired boy with chocolate brown eyes. His sister Lyra was the one going to Hogwarts this year, and also had inherited a mellower form of the Weasley red hair. Of course their red headed cousins Eyra and Conner weren’t too far off, Ron and Hermione’s Children. Pale little Angel Longbottom was excitedly talking with the other first years, Lyra Malfoy, Eyra Weasley, Kris Potter and Smoky Hawthorn. Yes, a muggle and a squib had had two wizards, but their twelve year old daughter Ebony was a muggle.

Vaughn joined the other parents that were present, Draco, Luna, Hermione, Ron, Sable and Ferret. Harry, Neville and Ginny were currently at Hogwarts preparing for another year of teaching. Vaughn watched all the kids talk until they needed to get on the train. There was a mad scurry to get everyone to say good bye to everyone else and pushed on to the train, but it miraculously happened. Vaughn sighed, the house was going to be quiet with both of her boys gone and Ivory being an extreme introvert that rarely talked when it wasn’t to egg Kris on. Sable caught it, and asked, “You okay?”

“As long as they have an easier time than we had.” Vaughn said, and they all heartily agreed. Either way, it was time for the Pack’s cubs to rise up and live in the world their parents had made peaceful for them.

-

(A/N: ... It’s over... Dammit, I’m crying. Okay, in the next week or so, I should have the first chapter of the sequel posted. I have no idea what the sequel will be called, so suggestions are welcome. Reviews are very much appreciated. Thanks to all of you who kept reading

until the very end. I love you all. As friends. Just friends. Just so you know, Ivory's middle name is May because that was Vaughn's mother's name, Kris was named after the kris, a Malaysian dagger with a jagged blade and his middle name is Remus. I only changed Hermione and Ron's kids names because I am not particularly fond of them. Until I see you (review)again, Lemonbomber out!)